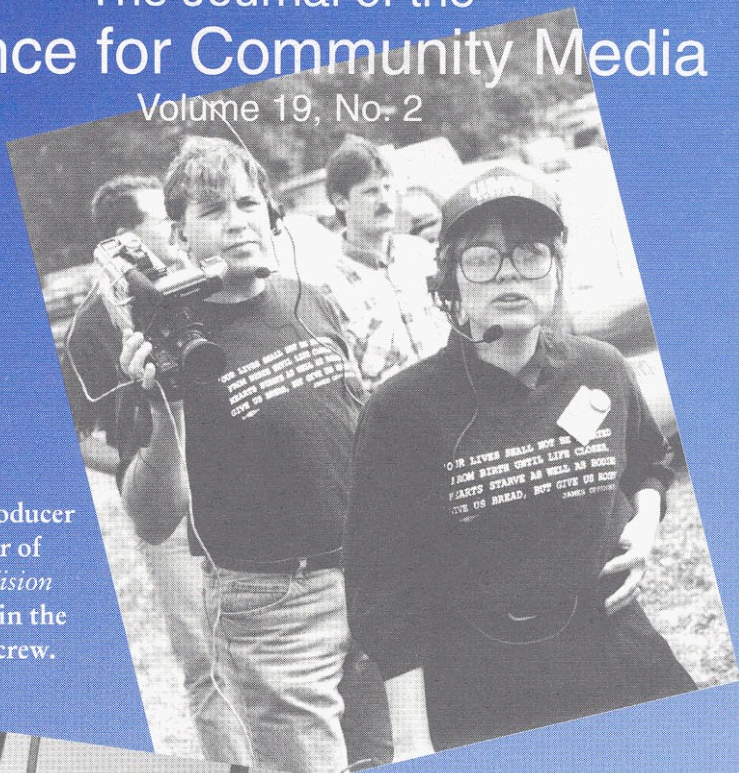


The Journal of the  
Alliance for Community Media  
Volume 19, No. 2

Labor Access Producer  
Rosemary Feurer of  
*St. Louis LaborVision*  
on location and in the  
studio with her crew.



# Labor & Access





## Get in touch with your community with the Interactive Video Bulletin Board

### THE CHANNEL THAT TAKES REQUESTS:

- Lets viewers choose what they see.
- Handles up to 999 topics of any length.
- Prints reports of what viewers choose.
- Gives documented proof of viewership.
- Uses PC word processor files as input.
- Fast, easy setup and maintenance.
- Now in use in over 27 U.S. cities.

### What current owner-operators say about the Interactive Video Bulletin Board:

"I can watch it taking calls from my office, and know that we're serving the community. The feedback helps us understand our viewing audience's likes and dislikes."

-David Vogel, General Manager,  
Community Television of Knoxville

"Since placing the system in service, we have seen a community response that now exceeds 18,000 inquiries per month. The Interactive Video Bulletin Board has become an integral part of our community service program"

- Ian N. Wheeler, Executive Director,  
Fairfax Cable Access Corporation

"Since installing the Interactive Video Bulletin Board, we've gotten more interest and participation from non-profits than we had in the last 10 years. It's less work, more effective, and it's fun for viewers to use!"

- Lynn Carillo-Cruz, Former Executive Director,  
Quote...Unquote, Albuquerque

"It's the lowest-cost, highest-impact service we offer to local non-profits. During September...participating organizations reported that an average of 65% of their calls resulted from viewership of the Interactive Video Bulletin Board."

- Barbara Popovic, Executive Director,  
Chicago Access Corporation

For a brochure and videotape, contact:

### INTERACTIVE PUBLICATIONS

1651 N. DAYTON STREET, SUITE 306, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60614  
312-642-0884 • FAX: 312-642-1735





Volume 19, No. 2

CMR EDITORIAL BOARD

Dirk Koning, Chair  
Sally Alvarez, Mary Bennin Cardona,  
Hans Klein, Brian Wilson

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF THIS ISSUE

Sally Alvarez

COORDINATING EDITOR

Jim Peters

NATIONAL OFFICE

Barry Forbes, Executive Director  
Jeffrey Hops, Director,  
Government Relations  
Kelly Matthews, Director of Member Services  
Wanda Sheridan, Conference Director  
Richelle Sumter, Project Coordinator

ALLIANCE FOR COMMUNITY MEDIA  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Alan Bushong, *Chair*  
Ann Flynn, *Vice Chair*  
Velvaee (Vel) Wiley, *Treasurer*  
Greg Wawter, *Secretary*  
Brian A. Wilson, *Chair of Regional Chairs*  
Ruben Abreu, Randy Ammon,  
Barbara Bryant, Judy Crandall, Sue Dicle,  
Ron Fitzherbert, Vince Hamilton,  
Mike Henry, Kathleen Greenwood, James  
Horwood, Carl Kucharski, Paul LeValley,  
Debbie Mason, Julianne Murray,  
Anthony Riddle, Gladys Rogers,  
David Vogel, *Directors*



ALLIANCE  
FOR  
COMMUNITY  
MEDIA

*Community Media Review* [ISSN 1074-9004]  
is published by the Alliance for Community  
Media, Inc. Subscriptions \$35 a year for five  
issues. Send subscriptions, memberships, ad-  
dress changes, editorial and advertising in-  
quiries to the Alliance for Community Media, 666  
11th St. NW, Suite 806, Washington, DC 20001-  
4542. Phone 202/393-2650; Fax: 202/393-2653.  
E-mail AllianceCM@aol.com.

Bulk orders for additional copies considered in-  
dividually. Contact the national office for in-  
formation on rates and delivery.

Copyright ©1996 by the Alliance for Commu-  
nity Media, Inc. Prior written permission of  
the Alliance for Community Media required for  
all reprints or usage.

# In this Issue

<b>The Voice of the People</b> by Alan Bushong .....	4
<i>Alliance Chair on the theme of this issue</i>	
<b>Deregulation was the Issue</b> by Alan Bushong .....	5
<i>Public Policy and the recent telecommunications legislation</i>	
<b>Connections</b> .....	5
<i>News of interest to Alliance members</i>	

## Labor & Access

<b>Who's Doing Labor Programming?</b> .....	6
<i>An international list of labor media producers</i>	
<b>Ask The Gap!</b> by Sally Alvarez .....	6
<i>Does labor access make a difference? You bet!</i>	
<b>Do You Have a Labor Program on Your Community Channel?</b> by Sally Alvarez .....	7
<i>An introduction by the editor-in-chief of this issue</i>	
<b>Resources for Labor Access Producers</b> .....	8
<i>Sources of information, ideas, stock footage and distribution</i>	
<b>Labor X Launching Worker Video Training</b> by Simin Farkhondeh .....	8
<i>Labor at the Crossroads' new initiative</i>	
<b>Minnesota at Work is Labor Access at its Best</b> by Randy Croce .....	9
<i>Labor Education Service strengthens effectiveness of labor actions</i>	
<b>How-To Advice from Profiles of Labor</b> by Richard Taliaferro .....	10
<i>Thinking of starting your own labor access show?</i>	
<b>LaborVision Energizes Local Union Members</b> by Sally Alvarez .....	11
<i>Successful St. Louis series effects change in major campaigns</i>	
<b>Cable 6 Helps Bust the Union Busters</b> by Patricia Westwater .....	12
<i>Mainstream vs. access media in Tultex campaign</i>	
<b>Labor Television Beyond the Beltway</b> by Larry Duncan .....	13
<i>Decade-long series covers "War Zone" to "Comfort Zone"</i>	
<b>UAW's Cable Show in L.A.</b> by Keith Skotnes .....	14
<i>Long-running Los Angeles show poised for expansion</i>	
<b>Ax-Wielding Congressman Exposed on Labor Access TV!</b> by Suzanne Patzer .....	15
<i>Access documentary footage picked up by ABC</i>	
<b>Arkansas Works</b> by Jay Johnson .....	15
<i>Labor access in Little Rock</i>	
<b>Labor Link TV</b> by Fred Lonidier .....	16
<i>UC-San Diego photography professor produces labor access</i>	
<b>UPPNet Joins With Free Speech TV</b> by Sally Alvarez .....	17
<i>National labor cable channel possible</i>	
<b>Labor's Voice Heard in Maine</b> by Mike Cavanaugh .....	18
<i>UNITE! Regional Director produces weekly series</i>	
<b>Resources and Services for Labor Access Producers</b> by Sally Alvarez .....	19
<i>Labor Institute of Public Affairs lends helping hand</i>	
<b>Labor on the World Wide Web</b> .....	19
<i>Labor embraces the information age</i>	
<b>Independent Producer Challenges Labor And Access</b> by Tony Chapin .....	20
<i>Independent producer's lessons about labor establishment</i>	
<b>Rhode Island LaborVision</b> by Chuck Schwartz .....	20
<i>R.I. production reaches two-thirds of state population</i>	
<b>Workers' Voices In The Global Economy</b> by Steve Zeltzer .....	21
<i>Labor access goes international</i>	



# *From the Chair*

## The Voice of the People

by Alan Bushong

As we advance through a seemingly unending series of media giant mergers, with a diminishing number of people bold enough to champion the rights of all Americans to communicate, it's important to step back and look at the history of community media. The lessons of history are especially appropriate for labor and the American worker.

Three powerful social movements of the 1960's—Civil Rights, Equal Rights for Women and the Anti-Vietnam War protest—led a massive group of Americans into activism for the first time. These activists quickly learned that the commercial media was funded by and showed bias to corporate interests. The work of these activists led, in the early 1970s, to the commitment of unused cable channel capacity to local communities. As cable systems expanded, the principle of community channels and facilities, services and equipment to operate the channels was increasingly written into franchises as part of the compensation for private, for-profit use of public rights of way.

At that time, organized American Labor was a relatively powerful force. Although unions did not own communications systems, membership was large and labor was generally able to make its message known.

Labor has little of such privileges today. Jobs have been moved from union states to non-union states, and are now going overseas. Automation has come home to roost, but the 1960s promise of automation—people will be working fewer hours a day—is nowhere on the horizon. There is ongoing agitation to lower the minimum wage—all from people making many times the meager minimum wage equivalent of \$10,000 a year.

Wages in 1995 are rising less than the Consumer Price Index, which is about 3%. At the same time, giant corporations are recording record profits; at press deadline for this article, the Dow Jones index was

on target to rise about 30% in 1995.

The interests of the American worker are rarely represented on commercial media. Instead, the victims have been assigned the blame: unions are blamed for the prices of consumer goods. Corporate bosses receive enormous bonuses for cutting the pay of the workers.

As the plight of workers has grown worse, workers have been pitted against each other. **Rush Limbaugh**, who is making more than \$15,000,000 a year and has little in common with his viewers/listeners, coordinates anger of displaced workers

against the government, unions, and social progressives—none of which are the problem.

While American labor needs to "speak for itself" more than ever, the avenues are decreasing.

The **News Channel** joint venture of NBC and **Microsoft** follows a string of media-giant mergers and action to further centralize telecommunications. **Walt Disney Company** purchased ABC, TCI acquired the last chunk of spectrum for DBS services, **Microsoft** launched its own on-line service and **Time-Warner** merged with **Turner Communications**.

The Time-Warner/Turner marriage provided an especially touching moment. Ted Turner said he was merging because "I'm tired of being one of the little guys." Wait a minute—the man owns the most widely-distributed broadcast superstation, four satellite channels, the **Atlanta Braves** and who knows what else — and he's a "little guy?"

Ted, how about the workers earning \$10,000 a year, with no benefits? How about migrant farm workers working for less than minimum wage, staying in labor camps? How about non-union garment workers kept in nearly slave conditions? If

Ted Turner is a "little guy," what are they?

I recently heard the comment that the white man of the 1990s is experiencing what the black man experienced in the 1960s. In the 1960s, high-paying unskilled labor jobs went away, as open-hearth steel mills gave way to modern oxygen and electric furnaces. Automobile jobs also disappeared to mechanized assembly lines.

In the 1990s, high-paying skilled labor is also disappearing as manufacturing is more fully automated. As we move to an information-based economy, the problem will get worse. A laptop computer can already replace half of the traditional office. What will voice response bring?

American workers will increasingly realize the dilemma: automation, jobs overseas, and shrinking wages as corporate profits grow. The anger is bound to continue, and the talk show hosts purporting to represent workers will be hard-pressed to deliver.

Why? People making millions each year cannot represent the interests of those barely making a living wage. The American worker and the organizations representing workers must have the opportunity to speak for themselves. Only in this way can we address the fundamental concern of the founders of this country, that everyone

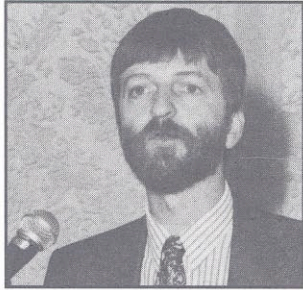
is endowed "with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

*Alan Bushong is Chair of the Alliance, and has been a member of four labor unions.*

**"The Time-Warner/  
Turner marriage  
provided an  
especially touching  
moment. Ted  
Turner said he was  
merging because  
'I'm tired of being  
one of the little  
guys.'"**

### **Join the Alliance Editorial Board**

If you would like to participate in the creation of the **Community Media Review**, contact Alliance Editorial Board Chair **Dirk Koning** at **Community Media Center**, 50 Library Plaza NE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503. Phone and fax: (616) 459-4788; e-mail [dirk@grcmc.org](mailto:dirk@grcmc.org).



*Alan Bushong*



## Public Policy

# Deregulation was the Issue

by Alan Bushong

It's somewhat ironic to be writing about the Telecommunications Bill in the Labor issue of *CMR*. While the Alliance can take pride in preserving provisions which protect the future of community media channels and centers, the bill in general failed to serve the public interest and ignored the American worker. The emerging telecommunication networks are being designed almost exclusively for the purpose of conducting commerce; subsequently, Americans are being defined as consumers. Period.

The purpose of the telecommunications bill was never to create jobs. The goal was to eliminate regulation, allowing corporate giants to fight over each other's existing business and to dominate whatever new business emerges. That's not popular to say, so the public relations line was "the bill creates jobs."

Let's extend our thanks to the Alliance staff and key members across the country who worked overtime to preserve community media. In the finest sense of the American worker, our staff—Jeff Hops and Barry Forbes on this legislative issue—worked tirelessly in Washington, DC to leave no stone unturned. Alliance members did their share by keeping their Representatives and Senators informed; Jeff and Barry report that Congressional staffs increasingly know about the Alliance and community media issues. Thanks again!

This bill represents a different way of looking at our attempts to peacefully live together. It is a return to *laissez-faire* capitalism—leave things alone. In past ages, this approach led to the feudal system, kids working ten hours a day in coal mines and factory sweat shops. What can we expect now?

Unfortunately, the bill is weak in serving local communities. "Open video system" (OVS) provisions may potentially allow Bells and cable operators to avoid rate regulation and the abilities of local governments to protect the interests of their residents. Language providing low-cost access to advanced telecommunications services was weakened. Provisions to prevent "electronic redlining"—racially discriminatory construction of

advanced networks—were fully deleted.

As Barry Forbes said, "Telecommunications policy should enhance average Americans' ability to connect to telecommunications networks, both as producers and consumers. The OVS provisions could have just the opposite effect."

Discussion included a lot of talk about competition, competition that would increase business and jobs.

History indicates otherwise, showing a steady stream of monopoly businesses in telephone and cable. Telecommunications systems cost so much to build that we are unlikely to have more than one. When the system owner can also provide programs—like cable as opposed to the common carrier model of telephone—advantages of ownership dim the prospects of competition. A brief look at the economics is revealing.

The bill was driven by the Regional Bells, which want to sell long distance telephone and cable in addition to telephone local service and instrument fees. The second smallest regional Bell has higher annual revenues than all the long distance carriers. The smallest regional Bell has higher annual revenues than all cable companies combined. How long can others compete with the Bells?

The Alliance must now turn its attention to the FCC as it develops regulations to implement the law. We will work to build on the FCC's greater understanding of community media and

the general needs of local communities.

The telecommunications bill champions consumerism and largely ignores championing democratic discourse. A society which already has far more "stuff" than is necessary is now being

bombarded with messages to buy even more unnecessary things. The jobs created do not keep pace with the prices of the products we make, but corporate

profits soar. We continue to deplete the earth's resources, and for what purpose? Are we any happier than five years ago?

Someday we'll grow tired of our consumer-driven debt. We'll have bought everything imaginable. We'll have been there, done that. Our Visa accounts will have nothing left to prove.

We'll turn our attention toward this planet and its inhabitants. Jobs will be related to basic human needs. We'll work to develop sustainable communities. Our laws will reflect a common sense of purpose.

We are running a marathon toward that destination. The current telecommunications law is not a particularly good part of the race. But this law, the ensuing FCC regulations and our work with elected officials are all part of the process. And the destination is as noble and deserving of our work as ever.

Alan Bushong is Chair of the Public Policy Committee of the Alliance for Community Media.

**"The smallest regional Bell has higher annual revenues than all cable companies combined."**

## CONNECTIONS

### Media Exchange in Amsterdam from Internet reports

As local cable TV and broadcast possibilities all over the world multiply at an amazing rate, the programming content hardly keeps up with it. Local program producers and broadcast organizations would especially benefit from an exchange

program through which master tapes and airing rights would be coordinated.

In Amsterdam, Media Exchange, one of the world's most densely populated cable networks with 500,000 plus subscribers, has taken the initiative to set up a web site to act as a meeting point for

See *Connections*, page 30...



## Who's Doing Labor Programming?

**Hotel Workers' Union**  
**Dominic Bozzotto**  
Local 26, 58-62 Berkley St.  
Boston, MA 02116  
617-423-3335

**TV 214-Letter Carriers**  
**Today**  
**Carl Bryant**  
NALC  
214 12th St.  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
415-621-0214

**First Tuesday**  
**Leo Canty**  
35 Marshall Rd.  
Rock Hill, CT 06067  
203-257-9782

**Cavanaugh's Corner**  
**Mike Cavanaugh, Sue Veit, & Richard Rhames**  
P.O. Box 365  
Biddeford, Maine 04005  
207-772-7371

**Labor Beat**  
**Committee for Labor Access**  
**Larry Duncan**  
37 S. Ashland  
Chicago, IL 60607  
206-281-8901

**Labor At the Crossroads**  
**Simin Farkhondeh**  
c/o American Social History Project  
99 Hudson St. 3rd Floor  
NYC, NY 10013  
212-966-4248

**St. Louis Labor Vision**  
**Rosemary Feurer**  
3323 Magnolia  
St. Louis, Missouri 63118  
314-773-0605

Continued on page 11...

# Does Labor Access Make a Difference? Ask The Gap!

by Sally Alvarez

Last year, an explosive video, *Zoned for Slavery*, exposed the conditions of young women workers in El Salvador to audiences all over the U.S. These women toil in sweatshops contracted to major American retailers like **The Gap**, **Eddie Bauer**, and **J.C. Penney**. *Zoned for Slavery* didn't appear on *60 Minutes* or *20/20*. It showed in union halls, at community meetings, and on public access channels around the country. The video showed girls as young as 13 working 18 hours a day in factories making clothes for affluent consumers in U.S. shopping malls. These children live in dilapidated slums, their poverty-level wages often providing the sole support for an extended family. The girls are subject to intense harassment and beatings. They get no education, have no recreation or benefits of any kind. As they mature, they are less docile, and they are often fired after working a few years.

Recently, The Gap announced a decision to implement labor standards for their subcontractors making the garments sold in their stores. The Gap's decision came in response to a campaign mounted by the **Labor Committee for Human Rights in Central America**, in cooperation with America's largest textile and garment union, **UNITE**.<sup>1</sup> The Gap made this decision in spite of intense opposition from the retail industry, and their move set new standards for conditions and monitoring in offshore plants by retailers. The Labor Committee promoted a national tour of 41 cities with spokespeople **Charlie Kernaghan** and **Barbara Briggs**, who accompanied young women workers from El Salvador, Honduras and the Dominican Republic. The video documenting the appalling conditions was produced for the Labor Committee by **K.K. Keene** and **Rudy Stern** of **Crowing Rooster Arts**.

*Zoned for Slavery* showed in many cities around the country, including Chicago, New York, St. Louis, and Springfield, Illinois. In Chicago, local labor access producers accompanied Charlie Kernaghan to one of The Gap's retail mall outlets, where they taped Kernaghan

"We had the traditional 'hand-over-the-lens' shot when the store clerks realized what was going on..."

holding up garments produced by Salvadoran sweatshop labor and discussing conditions created by irresponsible outsourcing by U.S. companies. "We had the traditional 'hand-over-the-lens' shot when the store clerks realized what was going on," remembers **Larry Duncan** of *Labor Beat*. This tape was used as a local tie-in to the public access showing of *Zoned for Slavery*.

The campaign's success with The Gap resulted from a three-part approach: the combination of a high-quality video produced by activists committed to these issues, the sophisticated negotiating and legal strategizing by **UNITE**, and the availability of labor access programs to get the video and news of the tour out to large audiences. According to **UNITE** economist **Ron Blackwell**, the campaign is targeted at the retail industry, not just an individual company or country. Blackwell comments, "We have a whole industry here that is dirty; they make millions of dollars selling clothes produced under conditions that their customers find obnoxious. The video and the tour provide a way for American consumers to find out what these companies are doing, and once they find out, there is an explosion of opposition." Talks between **UNITE** and other retailers are continuing in the union's effort to make one industry implement standards and monitoring in all outsourcing operations. Local access producers who want to show the 23-minute tape can get it from the Labor Committee at (212) 242-0700. A donation of \$12 is requested.

During the fight around NAFTA in 1993, the labor movement warned Americans that the treaty would make existent problems of inhumane labor standards, pitiful wages, and environmental degradation abroad much worse. This is exactly what is happening. Retailers like The Gap need to be held responsible for the effects of their corporate policies. We can't insist on humane policies if we don't know what's going on. When labor can bring its case to the American public, we all benefit. Access for labor's message does make a difference.

*Sally Alvarez is the Editor-in-Chief of this issue of CMR.*

<sup>1</sup>Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) merged in the summer of 1995 with the International Ladies' Garment Workers (ILGWU) to form the Union of Needletrade, Industrial, and Textile Employees (UNITE).



## *From the Editor*

# Do You Have a Labor Program on Your Community Channel?

by Sally Alvarez

The last time *CMR* (at that time *CTR*) focused on labor and access was in 1983. At that time many labor supporters were saying:

*What a great way to get labor's message out to a local community: channel time, training, and equipment, and all virtually for free!*

....and access supporters were saying:

*What better way to insure support for access than to have stable organizations with thousands of members and voters standing behind you?*

Well, 13 years later, our situation might be characterized as great quality, not enough quantity! Do you have a labor program on your community's access channel? About 40 local labor access shows appear regularly on systems around the country. Shared and bicycled programs account for about 40 more. Given the huge number of access centers in the country, that's not a great number.

The purpose behind this issue of the *CMR* is to highlight the very successful labor shows that do exist, and to promote the expansion of labor programming on public access television. What you hold in your hands now is a result of many energetic, creative, and dedicated individuals who believe as I do that labor's message is too seldom heard in the U.S. media.

We cover a lot of ground in these pages, but we do not claim that this is a comprehensive picture of labor access. Many other labor shows and other independent initiatives in radio, in video, and in the computer media exist, and I hope we don't have to wait another 13 years to include all of them in the next *CMR* on labor and access.

More media access for labor's ideas and interests is not just a question of fairness. It is rapidly becoming a question

of survival. Our economy is undergoing radical restructuring. For the first time since Americans can remember, both productivity and profits are going up, but wages are going down. Issues of jobs, economics, trade (like NAFTA) and immigration aren't just academic questions. And there is no place on American television where the interests and voices of working people—and that is all of us, unless you happen to own a large corporation—are represented.

The labor movement speaks for both organized and unorganized workers, and it represents one of the

few voices questioning these destructive economic and social trends. It is also one of the few institutions possessing the political potential to lead a movement against it. Although the media portrays these economic changes as inevitable, thoughtful people inside and outside the labor movement know that the trends result from conscious policies to eliminate the opposition of organized people against the concentration of power and capital in the hands of a few. The fact

that commercial media routinely represent labor as outmoded, narrowly self-interested, or infested with criminals is no accident. Janine Jackson, writing in the December issue of *Extra!*, criticizes the "bland euphemisms, obscuring jargon, and sheer business boosterism" of reporting

that reduces workers to "employment costs" and turns the disastrous effects of corporate policies on working people and their communities into "perceived lack of sharing" of corporate wealth." Incidentally, Janine Jackson, Research Director of Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR), is also the host of the excellent labor access program produced out of Hunter College in New York, *Labor at the Crossroads*, or *Labor X*.

America's middle class living standard was built on the bargaining power of industrial unions. Now that the economy is globalizing, that standard cannot be defended by a labor movement whose support among Americans has been so seriously diminished by decades of denial and attacks by the media. American workers need public access television to tell their own stories and argue for their

own interests. And the Alliance needs the labor movement. Both movements can benefit from more of the creative synergy that is represented on these pages.

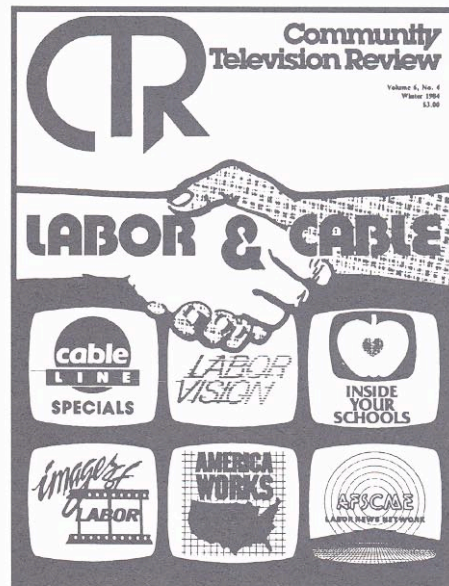
So why isn't there more labor programming on public access? A partial answer would be the unfortunate, longstanding suspicion between labor's top leadership and the young people who gave public access television its original momentum. Public access television was to a large extent the

brainchild of sixties activists who had learned bitter lessons about the power of the media to shape public opinion. During that same decade, the labor movement enjoyed relative prosperity and cooperation with business. Many unions supported

See *Do You Have*, page 27...



Sally Alvarez



The last *CMR* (at that time called *CTR*) to address Labor & Access was published 13 years ago.



## Resources for Labor Access Producers

**Labor Institute of Public Affairs**  
(LIPA/AFL-CIO)  
Karla Garland  
815 16th St. NW  
Washington, DC 20006  
(202) 637-5376

**UPPNet**  
(Union Producers' and Program-  
mers' Network)  
Fred Carroll  
P.O. Box 1750  
UFCW Local 1442  
Santa Monica, CA 90406  
(310) 395-9977

**Free Speech TV**  
Margaret Wagner  
P.O. Box 6060  
Boulder, Co. 80306  
(303) 442-8445

**Deep Dish TV**  
Dee Dee Halleck  
339 Lafayette St.  
New York, NY 10012  
(212) 420-9045

**We Do the Work** (PBS series)  
Patrice O'Neill  
5867 Ocean View Drive  
Oakland, CA 94618  
(510) 547-8484

**Shop Talk** (PBS series)  
Washington State AFL-CIO  
314 1st Avenue W.  
Seattle, WA 98119  
(206) 281-8901

# Dateline: New York, New York **Labor X** Launching Worker Video Training

by **Simin Farkhondeh**

**L**abor *At the Crossroads* (also known as **Labor X**) began seven years ago in a modest television television studio on 42nd Street. On the

eve of the 1988 presidential election, we realized that if we wanted a labor perspective about the election on television, we would have to produce a show ourselves. And we did. In 1989, **Labor X** moved from the **City University of New York**

(CUNY) Graduate Center to **Hunter College**, where we have fourished. Our

newest home is 99 Hudson Street (also the home of CUNY's **Center for Worker Education**) where we will begin our new venture, the **Worker Video Training Program**. **Labor X** has made use of CUNY's cable channel and public access stations in New York City and across the country to air opinions not found on commercial or public television: the need for a national health insurance program; the *Daily News* strike and the struggle against replacement workers and privatization; the impact of free trade and GATT on workers in Canada, Mexico, Guatemala, and the United States; the effects of continuous budget cuts; the status of undocumented workers in the garment industry and in the labor movement; and images of labor in the mainstream media.

CUNY proved to be the perfect place to bring together the coalition of independent media professionals, educators, students, and an advisory board representing the New York labor community. CUNY is one of the few institutions in the

country committed to the education of working-class students; it has provided substantial financial support to **Labor At the Crossroads**.

We are hoping to launch our newest

initiative, the **Worker Video Training Program**, in the fall of 1996. This program will teach New York City labor union members and staff how to produce media which represents a much-needed labor perspective. Through intensive hands-on workshops the program will train members to document demonstrations



Photo courtesy Labor X

**Ms. Linda Chavez-Thompson (left) presents award to Ms. Josephine LeBeau, Executive Director of 1707 AFSCME, at Labor at the Crossroads Awards Dinner, December 4, 1995.**

and actions, and to use the footage to create programs that are effective at provoking discussion around workers' issues. By combining technical know-how with an understanding of working people's struggles, members will learn how to use video in conjunction with workplace organizing and local union campaigns. We are grateful to Manhattan Borough President **Ruth Messinger**, who provided the seed money for video equipment that is allowing us to launch the **Worker Video Training Program**. To make this vital program a reality, we need the continued support of the labor movement.

**Labor X** is a show hosted by **Janine Jackson**, and it combines a variety of formats covering a variety of labor topics. **Labor X** tapes can be obtained to show on other access channels around the country. Contact **Simin Farkhondeh, Labor X**, 99 Hudson St. 3rd Floor, c/o American Social History Project, NY, NY 10013. Or call (212) 966-4248, ext 217.

*Simin Farkhondeh is Producer/ Director of **Labor X**.*



# *Dateline: Minneapolis, Minnesota*

## **Minnesota at Work is Labor Access at its Best**

by Randy Croce

**L**abor Education Service (LES) at the University of Minnesota has been exploring ways for video to advance the labor movement. We use cable access facilities, as well as our own equipment, to create original programs and collaborate with local unions to make their own shows. We use two equally important paths to get these shows to people. The first path is over cable television channels, the second is through showings to small groups and tape distribution directly to targeted audiences.

LES produces *Minnesota At Work*, a regular cable TV program on labor and working people's issues. It's shown weekly in a regular time slot on **Channel Six** throughout the seven-county Twin Cities area via the **Metro Cable Network (MCN)**. (It's also shown other times during the week to fill holes in the station's schedule.) We also drop off or mail copies to other cable stations in five cities around the state. The series has been running for over eleven years. We currently produce about 24 new programs each year.

I produce *Minnesota At Work* (aka *MAW*) along with **John See** and video unit director **Howard Kling**, both of whom are employed full-time by LES, which is part of the **Industrial Relations Center** within the **Carlson School of Management** at the University of Minnesota. We three take turns acting as primary producer for each show, while others may shoot or contribute in other ways. Volunteers and other LES staff sometimes add to the crew on studio shoots. We occasionally use tape which has been shot independently by local union members or by other video producers and organizations.

Some shows result from our own ideas, some from requests by local unions and others from working with a Minnesota **AFL-CIO** video steering committee. We often coordinate programs with legislative lobbying campaigns or other initiatives by the Federation or by individual unions.

We use an LES S-VHS camera and

cuts-only editing system for most of our field documentary programs. We occasionally borrow an extra camera and other equipment from the Minneapolis access center, **MTN**. We shoot all of our discussion shows using an MTN studio or remote van and have edited portions of a few programs on an access A/B roll system. The crucial service that the regional network and access centers provide to LES is their link to channels that cablecast our programs.

One big advantage of cable access for labor is the ability to have an affordable ongoing media presence, to build up an audience for labor issues through a regularly scheduled show. This may well be more helpful to the local labor community than a minute on a broadcast news show or even a one-time hour-long PBS program.

Using cable, we control program scheduling and have been able to coordinate cablecast of our shows with specific union events or campaigns to strengthen the effectiveness of labor actions. For example, during a recent bus strike, LES substituted a quickly produced show telling the drivers' side of the dispute in place of a previously scheduled program.

In another case, employees tuned in TVs located throughout a hotel to watch an *MAW* program about their struggle to get a fair contract with their employer. The program boosted the morale of the workers and strengthened support for the union which was able to pull off this

"subversive" showing right in the workplace.

The style of *Minnesota At Work* programs varies considerably. Some are original half-hour field documentaries. Others are magazine shows of two or three

shorter segments including documentaries, feature pieces or interviews. Studio shows, in which several people discuss an issue, sometimes starting with a short documentary-style roll-in, represent a large portion of our schedule. We have also produced videos of concerts and plays.

At one point, we wondered if

anyone was watching our show. Our potential cable audience is 290,000 families. But we really don't know exactly how many people are watching. We do know that we are reaching a segment of the population who are involved and influential in labor matters and that some of our programs have had an important impact on these viewers.

We've discovered that not only union members are watching, but that a local public television news host, newspaper columnists, human resource directors, employer bargaining attorneys and staff, and heads of state government agencies are among our viewers. In fact, we've gauged the effectiveness of our show, in part, by the negative phone calls and requests for copies of our show we've received from state department directors, the head of an insurance lobbying group, the governor's office and billionaire hotel

See *Minnesota*, page 25...



Photo courtesy Randy Croce

*Randy Croce (on camera) and John See (on audio, kneeling with plaid jacket) of Labor Education Service, taping at a sit-in by HERE Local 17 and supporters at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in Minneapolis.*



# How-To Advice from *Profiles of Labor*

by **Richard Taliaferro**

**A**s the founder of *Profiles of Labor*, Sacramento's first and only pro-labor access show, I want to share my experiences with others endeavoring to start or currently producing their own shows.

As a 23-year-old apprentice in the

**Operating Engineers' Local**

**Union No. 3** (heavy equipment operators), I took a few classes in labor studies. I began to feel a real sense of pride and dignity that I was part of that process and was a dues-paying member of one of the best organized building trades in the nation. I also became very aware that the union movement was under attack. I started getting involved with the labor movement by volunteering for voter registration drives and phone banks at my local union hall. I discovered that not only were many union

members unaware of the attacks on labor and our standard of living, but many of them didn't care or even want to be bothered with it. I found this apathy throughout the labor movement, and I decided I needed to do something to educate the younger members of my union. My union's local leadership encouraged me to write an article for our newsletter, *The Engineers' News* and though I had serious doubts about my writing skills, I did have the confidence of conviction. The first article was received so well I was asked write a series, but it seemed to me no one under 30 even bothered to read the articles.

I decided a new approach was needed, so I got involved with the **Sacramento Labor Council** and kept making the point that we need to educate young people if we are going to have a labor movement in the future. About this time I discovered **Access Sacramento**, the local community access station. I knew I had discovered a potentially powerful weapon for education. This was it! Not only could I learn to produce union educational programming,

but I could also get it on the air to over 200,000 potential viewers! I jumped in with both feet and took as many of the video production classes as I could handle and still work in construction during the day. The staff and other producers were very helpful and I made new contacts in the labor movement and in the community.

**"Not only could I learn to produce union educational programming, but I could also get it on the air to over 200,000 potential viewers!"**

Before long I was producing shows with volunteers from the access center. But in spite of my enthusiasm and excitement, I found all the legwork was up to me, and I was spending all my spare time and even my own money on this project. I was asked at one of the Labor Council meetings to draft a resolution explaining the importance of the show and asking for financial assistance. The director of Access Sacramento, **Ron Cooper**, offered to go to the Labor Council and

explain what the community access station did, and how it could help us get labor a fair voice in the media. My resolution passed, and I was able to get funding so I wouldn't have to go broke producing the show.

I really hoped the unions would start coming to me and telling me what they wanted on the show, but over the next few years, I had to practically beg some of the unions to be on my program. I spent a lot of time assuring the labor leaders that we were not the regular media, and that we are here to give labor a fair voice. Establishing a regular program schedule and publishing show times in the local labor newsletter made it easier to get topics and people on our shows. Now we have regular reports from various committees of the Labor Council like **Health and Safety** and **Law and Legislation**.

The show has been a success in many ways, but it took several elements to pull it off (new and prospective producers take note!):

**1. A producer and a dedicated production staff.** Any production is only

as good as the cooperation of all involved, but it needs to be coordinated by one person or a small committee. Had I not persisted in coordinating the access volunteers and kept after the staff of the Labor Council, this effort might not have gotten off the ground. However, had I not learned to delegate to my crew, the show would not have survived when I was unavailable to produce it for several months.

**2. A cooperative and well-organized community access station.** I didn't realize it until I started meeting labor access producers from all over the country, but we are very fortunate to have Access Sacramento in our community. They offer complete training in a comparatively modern studio, several edit bays, and a mobile truck studio. Access Sacramento has two complete TV stations and can broadcast radio over one of them. One of our greatest assets is the leadership of the access staff in that they really do want underrepresented voices from the community and they take an active role in making this happen.

**3. An active labor community.** There has to be willingness on the part of the local labor movement to get behind the idea of access. This is the producer's hardest job. It may take some doing to get local leaders involved, not because they don't want to, but maybe because they are understaffed and may be working as hard as they can and may not have time. **KEEP LOOKING!** You may get more participation from individual unions than you will from larger organizations.

Keep your original objective in focus and don't get distracted or discouraged by obstacles. It takes tremendous perseverance and fortitude, and just as in the labor movement, it takes the cooperation and organization of many people to pull it off. I really believe community access television is going to play an increasingly important role in the labor movement, and that the main thrust of its success will come from labor's grassroots.

*Richard Taliaferro is a member of the Operating Engineers, Local 3, and producer of Sacramento's Profiles of Labor.*



# *Dateline: St. Louis, Missouri*

## **LaborVision Energizes Local Union Members**

by Sally Alvarez

**R**osemary Feurer has been producing *St. Louis LaborVision* since May, 1991, working with a volunteer crew of 15-20 union members to produce approximately 25 one-hour original shows a year. Two *LaborVision* documentaries dealing with the Staley workers' lockout in Decatur, Illinois (*Deadly Corn* and *Struggle In the Heartland*) have been widely shown within the labor movement and on public access. Feurer recently learned that over 8000 copies of the programs were duplicated in the course of the long and bitter battle between the **United Paperworkers** (UPIU Local 7837) and the huge food conglomerate. The documentaries were used extensively in fundraising, worker education, publicity, and morale building among strikers and their families. Feurer is hopeful this is the first of many occasions when labor access programs—using footage actually taken by workers themselves—will be used in campaigns and for other PR purposes outside access cablecasting.

Feurer's show is independent from any official labor body, although she enjoys a cordial relationship and occasional financial support from many unions. *St. Louis LaborVision* is known both for its high quality and independence. Her large crew is unusual for a labor program.

Feurer recruits crew members from many different unions in the St. Louis area, and she credits the show with galvanizing involvement among union members whose talents and energies might otherwise be lost to their unions. "We have drawn people who had dropped out or away from the labor movement, whose own unions found no place for them. Most of these people would not have been involved in labor if not for our show in my estimation. In some cases the show attracted people who knew little

about unions even though they were members." Feurer's crew members are actively involved in generating ideas for the show, and frequently produce independent segments or entire episodes on their own.



Photo by Mike Sacco

**St. Louis LaborVision producer Rose Feurer (center) coordinates coverage with Labor Beat's Larry Duncan (left) at a rally in Decatur, Illinois.**

about unions even though they were members." Feurer's crew members are actively involved in generating ideas for the show, and frequently produce independent segments or entire episodes on their own.

When asked if her show has had any effect on the local media in St. Louis, she replied, "We have noticed an increase in coverage of local labor issues in general, beginning with a *Labor and Media* show we produced early on, when we skewered a

local reporter for his coverage. We influenced the coverage of the **NLRB** sit-downs by our presence. We prompted the *Riverfront Times* to cover the Staley issue. **Channel 9**, our PBS station, brought in *We Do the Work* at least in part due to our criticisms of the station for not airing it."

Recently Feurer has taken a temporary break from *St. Louis LaborVision*, but plans to return soon. The show is currently produced by **Dennis Cutter**, a member of **CWA**, and **Steve Maassen**, a labor supporter who works as a doorman at a local hotel. Feurer's own background as a labor historian is reflected in her response when asked about her motivations for producing the program. "The importance of doing the show is not on particular issues in

shows, but on the show's existence as an independent voice at all. It is part of the rebuilding of a labor culture that allows free and wide expression of ideas that are excluded from the mainstream media. Doing a P.R. show is useless for this purpose, and workers themselves see through this type of programming. It is boring and unworthy of the best traditions of the labor movement."

*Sally Alvarez is Editor-in-Chief of this issue of CMR.*

# LABOR ViSiON

## *Who's Doing Labor Programming?*

Continued from page 6

**UFCW Bay To Border**

**Union News**

**Bill Fiore**

**UFCW Local 101**

1 Hallidie Place, Suite 760

San Francisco, CA 94102

415-871-5730

415-693-0143

**Working TV**

**Julius Fisher**

2149 Parker Street

Vancouver, BC, V5L 2L6

Canada

604-253-6222

**AFSCME Council 93**

**Daniel Hart and Diane**

**Faye**

7 Franconia St.

Dorchester, MA 02122

617-635-4953

**Arkansas Works**

**Jay Johnson**

2801 University

Little Rock, AR 72204

501-569-8483

**Labor Link TV**

P.O. Box 13223

La Jolla, CA 93039

**Alternative Views**

**Frank Morrow**

8703-B Pineridge Dr.

Austin, TX 78729

**From the Democratic Left**

**Suzanne Patzer**

394 Oak St.

Columbus, OH 43215

614-224-2288

**Rhode Island LaborVision**

**Chuck Schwartz**

99 Bald Hill Rd.

Cranston, RI 02920

401-463-9900

Continued on page 17...



## *Dateline: Martinsville, Virginia*

# Cable 6 Helps Bust the Union Busters

by Patricia Westwater

Throughout the long, hot summer of 1994, a fever-pitched ad war sizzled over the airwaves of Cable 6, an independent (leased channel) cable station in the sleepy southern mill town of Martinsville, Virginia. No, it wasn't the **Oliver North** candidacy, it was the union campaign at the **Tultex Corporation**, and everyone in town was glued to their sets!

Granted, union drives are not typical television fare. Particularly in Martinsville, where millowners have kept a tight reign over generations of workers manufacturing fleece and furniture. But 2300 Tultex employees had just lost up to 30% of their incomes due to drastic cuts in wages and benefits by the company. For the fifth time in fifteen years they called in the **Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU)**, now renamed **UNITE**, after a 1995 merger with the **ILGWU** to run a union organizing drive at Tultex.

The union had lost four previous elections by narrow margins: two heart-breakers by less than 200 votes. Each time, the company spent huge amounts on union-busters, fired dozens of workers and intimidated hundreds out of voting "Union Yes." But in the fifth campaign that summer, an unlikely convergence of tabloid TV, creative union organizing, and fed-up employees resulted in a landslide union victory—the biggest in the textile industry in twenty years!

How did ACTWU manage to turn the tables on Tultex? By using Cable 6 as its primary weapon in: 1) exposing the company's illegal union-busting tactics, and 2) enabling union supporters to speak directly to their co-workers and the community about the benefits of union representation.

Cable 6, run by **Charles Rourke**, had been scooping affiliate news stations in

neighboring towns for months by the time the union campaign started. The clear town favorite, it combined legitimate news coverage with *Hard Copy* exposés of foibles by elected officials, the local rich

and the not-so-rich. Any scandal involving the sheriff or the rival cable operator's messy love life was hot call-in fodder for days. Through the lens of Cable 6, Martinsville became a *Peyton Place* for working people.

The union's only experience with the local media was with the newspaper, which was solidly in the company's pocket and had campaigned openly against the union during all the previous union drives. We quickly realized Cable 6 was a different operation altogether when on the third day of the campaign, Rourke set up a camera in the parking lot of Cable 6 and invited Tultex workers to tell viewers why they needed a union.

Two dozen workers went on the air and told viewers how employees voted for the company last election, but the company repaid them by cutting their wages, lying to them and firing them illegally. They needed a union contract to raise wages, and support their families and the community. Call-ins flooded the station, and a public dialogue on economic class and justice began in Martinsville that lasted all summer.

From that point on, union supporters went on the air at every opportunity. They organized call-ins to counter anti-union propaganda, and organized live press conferences. By using Cable 6, the union was able to break through the clouds of fear, disinformation and intimidation that the company imposed on any union discussion in the plant, and bring the discussion to the entire community.

Both the union and the company bought airtime on Cable 6 to run advertisements—a war which escalated daily.

Using an outside P.R. firm, Tultex produced more than 25 ads, and several hour-long anti-union programs. The union produced 16 ads, three ten-minute edited programs, and held nine televised press conferences.

The company produced more ads with slicker production. But the union won the ad war hands-down by producing humorous ads that caught company officials in inconsistencies, and that featured workers speaking for themselves about their lives. One ad juxtaposed footage of Tultex CEO **John Frank's** new million-dollar lakefront vacation home with a Tultex employee at her worn mobile home. The woman ends by commenting, "It's not right that we're getting cut to the bone, and John Frank's got a new home—his second one—and I can't even get my kids out of this trailer."

By using Cable 6 to communicate with the town, the union was able to neutralize the company's bag of dirty tricks, and put them on the defensive. Tactics that had worked for Tultex management in the past—bribing local preachers to talk against the union, firing union supporters, and threatening to close the plant — would cause too much bad press on Cable 6.

On August 18, triumphant workers at Tultex voted the union in by a two-to-one vote of 1321 to 710. The campaign had combined a strong organizing program in the plant with a powerful new style of communicating by TV. After the company's defeat, a dazed Tultex President **Chuck Davies** likened the bruising campaign to the Vietnam war coming "right into your living room." Hopefully, greater access to the power of television will help expose more corporate injustice, and bring greater economic rights to thousands of workers in the years to come.

*Patricia Westwater worked as ACTWU's (UNITE's) Communications Director in the Southern Region, and was responsible for video and television production during the Tultex campaign. Ms. Westwater now works as a media consultant for unions and non-profit organizations, and lives in Portland, Oregon.*



*Photo by Tom Copeland*

*Tultex workers celebrate their victory.*



## Dateline: Chicago, Illinois

# Labor Television Beyond the Beltway

by Larry Duncan

**L**abor Beat is one of the longest-running public access series in the U.S. focused on labor. Going on-line on Chicago Access Corporation's Channel 19 back in 1986, it has over the years been broadcast in about 15 different cities as a series, and can now be seen regularly in Chicago, New York, and St. Louis.

1995 has been especially rewarding for Labor Beat because we have been able to document closely the key labor stories in the U.S., at least east of the Mississippi. With the big changes in the AFL-CIO top leadership and the underlying causes that brought that about, this has been a historic year for labor, and it may also be the beginning for a new chapter for labor television.

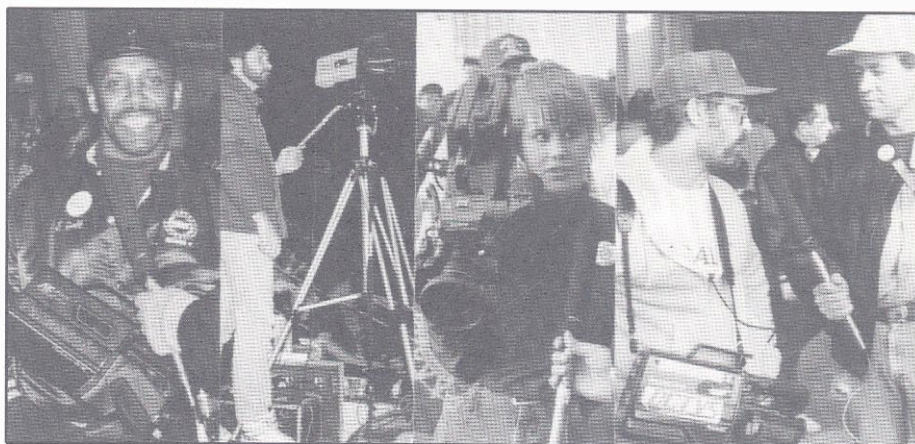
Our approach to the AFL-CIO story pretty much begins with the "War Zone" struggle in Central Illinois. (This is the lock-out of the A.E. Staley workers in Decatur, the labor dispute of the URW/USWA workers at Bridgestone-Firestone, and the Caterpillar strike of the UAW, variously in Decatur, Peoria and other communities.) Certainly these battles have brought forth courageous fighters, such as Staley worker/hunger striker Dan Lane and union democracy advocate Mike Griffin. But they have also brought forth outstanding videographers from the ranks who have documented first-hand, up-close and personal every important episode in a way utterly unprecedented in labor history.

The U.S. will now be entering a period of confrontation between the two major classes not unlike the 1930s. Sixty years ago, the portable motion picture camera was available just in time for a few pioneering film documentarists to make pictures like *Salt of the Earth* with relatively small budgets, but budgets still

beyond the reach of Depression-era workers and most union locals.

Not so today. The United Auto Workers Local 974 in Peoria, Illinois, for example, produced a regular series on the East Peoria public access channel (called *Mountain Climber*) which documented

us at Labor Beat is locked-out Staley worker Jerry Fergusson. Working with a very basic VHS camcorder, Jerry has been "Anchor Camera One" in the *War Zone Primary Chronicles*. We've used hours of his footage of police peppergassing peaceful demonstrators in front of Staley's



Photos by Steve Dalber

*Labor video activists cover the UAW solidarity rally in Peoria, Illinois during the 1992 Caterpillar strike. Left to right: Michael Elliott (member UAW 551), Steger, IL; Steve Thompson, St. Louis Labor Vision; Corinna Christensen, media intern for UAW Solidarity House in Detroit; Mike Kern (member UAW 221), Defiance, OH; and Martin Conlisk (member IBEW 134), for Labor Beat.*

the Caterpillar strike twice a month. Through the efforts of Mike Legel and others, *Mountain Climber* camcorders covered everything from community support actions to walkouts. When UAW 974 members staged a plant protest over Caterpillar's unconstitutional attempt to prevent them from wearing T-shirts with union slogans, their cameras were there at the plant door to record the extraordinary image and sound of hundreds of autoworkers chanting union slogans while they walked out. The autoworker shooting this knew exactly where and how this was going to happen, whereas the local network stations didn't. *Mountain Climber* got the best footage, and Labor Beat put that show on in Chicago, along with a few other *Mountain Climber* shows.

Another important footage source for

workers tried to address the Executive Council. (They were not invited.) Jerry Fergusson was part of that trip, and detailed all of its key moments, including when the three local union presidents from

Decatur emerged from their audience with the AFL-CIO Executive Council and describe their immediate impressions.

Actually, their conversation is very subdued, and it is not what some would consider interesting footage. (The networks

are only interested in fisticuffs and tear-gas.) Labor Beat created an entire show, *Our Class of People*, which has as its pivotal moment that dramatic scene with the three union presidents describing the clinically orchestrated snub by the AFL-CIO Executive Council. Everything before it leads up to understanding that moment, everything afterwards shows the conse-

See Labor Television, page 22...

# labor beat

Chicago's independent rank and file forum



# *Dateline: Los Angeles, California*

## UAW's Cable Show in L.A.

by Keith Skotnes

**W**estern Region Five of the UAW International Union currently airs a monthly labor access program, *This Working Life*, on some fifteen cable stations in Southern California. The effort is coordinated out of the UAW's Los Angeles area office and volunteers from several local unions produce, videotape and distribute the show. *This Working Life* focuses on labor and community issues using a 30-minute format which ranges from talk show to documentary.

The show has come a long way since the pioneering efforts of a handful of local union activists thrust the UAW onto the local public access airwaves about ten years ago. Over the years, there have been

successes and setbacks. Most notably, the rapid decline in the area's automobile and defense industries has caused a constant turnover in the union volunteers who are essential to the project. This lack of personnel has at times threatened the

ongoing viability of the show. But a core group of activists, convinced of the importance of labor access, has persevered. *This Working Life* has continued to air, and is now on the brink of a major expansion as the

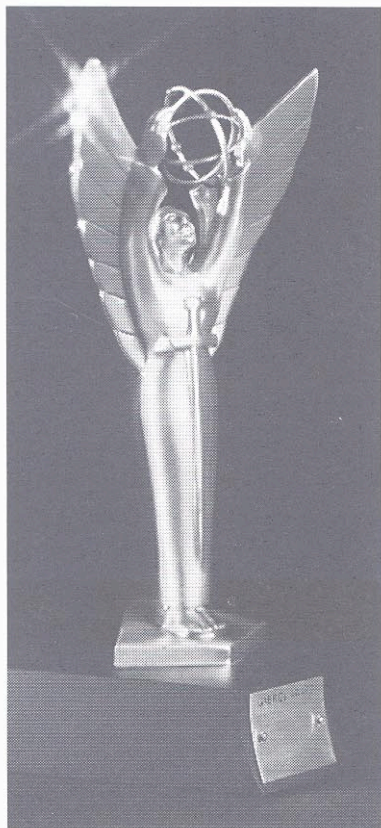
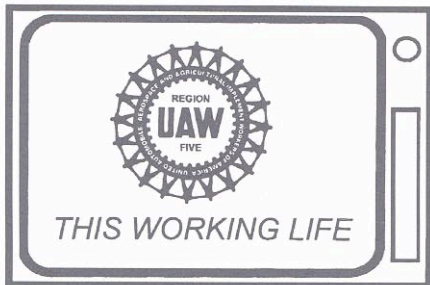
**Los Angeles County Federation of Labor** has committed to join the UAW in production of the program.

Despite the constant struggle to keep the program going, the effort has yielded notable results. The UAW production team was especially proud last year when an episode of the program won best talk show

honors at the annual **Lakewood Community Television Awards Banquet**. The winning program was an episode entitled *Rosie the Riveter*, which examined the plight of women working in the defense industry during World War II. Archival footage of assembly line production highlighted an interview with a local union retiree activist who vividly described the working life of women during the war and the struggle to unionize the aircraft industry. Other episodes have examined topics such as ADA, Proposition 187, and health care reform.

Lakewood Community Channel 52 is the base for studio work. However, the UAW has invested in some basic camera and editing equipment to assist in production of the show. Newly-elected UAW Director **Jim Wells**, who oversees the western region of the union, is particularly supportive of the project. "1996 is going to be a pivotal year for our union and the

*See UAW's Cable Show, page 30...*



*The national Catholic association of  
broadcasters and communicators*

## *The 1996 Gabriel Awards*

Honoring radio and television programs that enrich their audiences through a values-centered vision of humanity.

### **Program Categories:**

Entertainment • The Arts • News and Information • Religion •  
Community Awareness Campaigns • Children's Programming •  
Features • PSAs • Station of the Year Awards • Personal  
Achievement Award

**Deadline: June 5, 1996**

For Information and/or Entry Forms call:  
National Office (513) 229-2303

To Enter...Send Tapes, Forms & Fees to:  
Gabriel Awards, Unda-USA,  
901 Irving Avenue, Dayton, Ohio 45409-2316



## *Dateline: Columbus, Ohio*

# Ax-Wielding Congressman Exposed on Labor Access TV!

by Suzanne Patzer

**D**ozens of demonstrations and rallies rocked Columbus, Ohio during the 1995 "Summer of Discontent" over the so-called "Contract With America." On July 21, the local **Service Employees International Union Local 1199** organized the largest and most exciting of the demonstrations against the budget cuts.

The protesters targeted **Congressional Representative John Kasich**, an ally of **Speaker Newt Gingrich**. Kasich heads the powerful **House Budget Committee** and is making a name for himself as the meanest of the budget ax-wielders, proposing cuts to NEA, welfare, Medicare, Medicaid, school lunch programs, and virtually every other New Deal and Great Society program. **John Sweeney**, who was soon-to-be president of the national **AFL-CIO**, **Linda Chavez-Thompson**, Sweeney's running mate, **Patricia Ireland**, national president of **NOW**, and others addressed hundreds of determined demonstrators. In front of the federal

building, guitar-strumming SEIU members sang labor songs and songs denouncing Kasich and his budget cuts. The chanting protesters marched four blocks to the Ohio statehouse where they stopped at the busiest intersection in downtown Columbus and blocked traffic with their bodies. Twenty protesters, in the finest tradition of labor, sat down in the center of Broad and High Streets for over fifteen minutes until police arrived to arrest them and take them to jail.

Video cameras caught the entire demonstration for later playback on **ACTV**, Columbus' public access cable television station. Edited footage played on a special hour-long episode of the series, *From the Democratic Left*. Most of the mainstream media offered their usual sound bites, but, fortuitously, an acquaintance from the ABC network affiliate

missed the arrest and "borrowed" the footage to play on the six and eleven o'clock news. The local ABC news report provided more extensive and complete coverage than the other two network affiliates.

**"...the ABC network affiliate missed the arrest and 'borrowed' the footage to play on the six and eleven o'clock news."**

Public access cameras caught and documented uncommon and extraordinary acts of civil disobedience in the usually staid

Columbus, Ohio. The video documents the new spirit of union activism that propelled Sweeney to victory as AFL-CIO President. The raw footage became part of the SEIU's video archive and was sent to office of John Kasich, who conveniently missed the event. Kasich had been wrongly bragging that there were no demonstrations against his budget in central Ohio.

The edited piece, *We Shall Not Be* See *Ax-Wielding*, page 28...

## *Dateline: Little Rock, Arkansas*

# Arkansas Works

by Jay Johnson

**A**rkansas Works is a semi-monthly labor public affairs cable TV program. It is produced by the **Labor Education Program** of the **University of Arkansas** at Little Rock in cooperation with the **Arkansas AFL-CIO**.

The producer, **Jay Johnson**, uses a studio, two cameras, a modest switcher and editing equipment at the university or at the cable center to develop the program. Johnson also scripts, edits, directs, and distributes the program. The host is usually labor educator **Diane Thomas-Holladay**. The program enjoys a potential viewership of 90,000 subscribers via four cable outlets, including the university channel, throughout central and north-

western Arkansas.

*Arkansas Works* has been produced without interruption since its beginning in late 1985 and now has 235 programs to its credit. *Arkansas Works* covers a range of topics from local affairs, such as the petition campaign to change the Arkansas workers' compensation law, to national issues such as the Workplace Fairness Act (S.55). Most often using the talking head format, the program has covered health care reform, **Jesse Jackson's** visit to Arkansas on behalf of striking auto workers in Hope, organizing demonstrations by the **Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers' Union** (now UNITE), the effects of NAFTA on Arkansas workers, testimony by labor union women after their visit to the maquiladora area of

Mexico, and workers' Memorial Day. The program has also featured labor guest speakers at state AFL-CIO conventions and functions.

Relations with the cable system are generally cordial. In the Little Rock area, public access is provided by **Comcast**; in Northwest Arkansas on access channel #4, by **Time Warner**. The program is also distributed by the University of Arkansas at Little Rock through the government/education access channel managed and operated by **North Little Rock High School**.

*Jay Johnson works at the University of Arkansas (Labor Education Program) in Little Rock, Arkansas, where he produces Arkansas Works.*



# Dateline: San Diego, California

## Labor Link TV

by Fred Lonidier

**L**abor Link TV has been cablecasting continuously on three and sometimes four cable stations

in San Diego County since 1988. Though it started out as a collective effort, after shooting the first program, the effort fell to me to keep it going. In fact, out of a starting group of about 20 labor activists and supporters, I was

the only one who had experience in all aspects of video production and access to the necessary equipment. (I teach photography in a fairly well video-equipped art department at **University of California in San Diego**). It just seemed very obvious to us that the possibilities of public access television should be taken advantage of in an era where the whole country is hooked on media. We understood that unions suffer more from invisibility than from negative coverage.

One of the advanced courses in my department is Documentary, and quite a number of times I have been able to get a small group of a class to commit to producing an episode of **LLTV** for their major project for the quarter. I was also able to get a former graduate student of the department, **Berne Smith**, to design the logo.

Another resource that most independent labor cable groups use is each other. Fairly frequently, tapes produced by other groups as well as the more "official" tapes of international unions and the **AFL-CIO's Labor Institute of Public Affairs (LIPA)** are formatted for **LLTV** and shown here. On only one other project was there a group of labor activists here, and we made a two-part tape on the

unions at **National Steel and Shipbuilding Company**. There are a number of ways labor programming can get produced even if there are only one or two committed people. A regularly scheduled time is really necessary because audience-building depends on it. Also, some publicity is needed.

**LLTV** considers its main audience to be the local labor movement. Today's union members cannot be

counted on to know much about unionism in general or even their own organization. One could call it "educating the organized" or part of what is known as internal organizing. There is also a strong emphasis on struggle and solidarity as labor finds itself besieged by employers and their allies. Though the program has good relations with unions here, it was decided to stay independent of any union local, international, or the Labor Council in order to stay out of the way of the internal politics that inevitably determines the direction of resources. It allows **LLTV** to even be critical of our movement (from a pro-union point of view) without any local union having to answer for it when

financial support is given. I argue that the program can have greater credibility by labor supporting it but not owning it. On the other side, there is a need for responsibility and accountability for media producers: our programs go around labor organizations and directly into the homes of

their members.

Currently, **LLTV** has three people

who can do camera work and two of us who can edit. The most ambitious project recently was **Drywalleros: Huelguistas** ("Drywallers: Strikers"). It looked at the major struggle here in Southern California to reorganize a trade in the residential building trades. The significance of this strike was multiple in that these were immigrant Mexican workers; they were very militant and solid; they won; and there were very important divisions among them. This was a collaboration between myself and **Jose Casarez** who had just graduated from **UCSD** in communications and is now a film student at **USC**. As with other **LLTV** tapes, we were able to obtain and use a lot of footage taken by the strikers themselves.

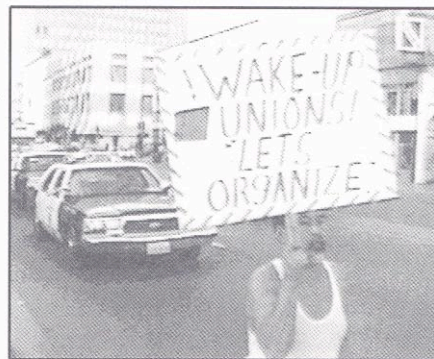
At the next level, **LLTV** is part of a network of other labor video producers. **UPPNet** is a loose grouping of independents, officially supported programs like **We Do the Work** in the Bay area, and affiliated organizations like **LIPA**. There has been an annual conference of **LaborTech** that brings together a lot of us to share ideas and programs. It has been

"in the air" that the labor movement should move beyond its narrow sponsorship of programming and be a major funding source for the independents as well. **UPPNet** members have promoted a proposal for a national cable

channel. Both public access and public television have serious drawbacks to providing adequate labor television. Perhaps with new leadership in the **AFL-CIO**, there will be more possibilities for diverse media outlets. There is a tremendous need for an informed, involved, and critical rank and file to revitalize the unions in the U.S.

*Fred Lonidier teaches photography at the University of California in San Diego, and produces Labor Link TV.*

*Video stills courtesy Labor Link TV.*





# A National Labor Cable Channel?

## UPPNet Joins With Free Speech TV

by Sally Alvarez

Should the labor movement have its own labor channel on cable systems nationwide? Labor access producers, when asked, give a resounding **YES!**—but getting the ball rolling on such a major undertaking is another question. An **AFL-CIO** study several years ago estimated the cost of a labor satellite channel start-up at \$5 million, but that figure was widely disputed. With several hundred channels promised in most cable markets within the next few years, labor supporters argue that the labor movement has no excuse not to start planning now for this project. **National Empowerment Television**, appearing on **TCI** systems now, is only one of several very conservative channels gearing up for full-time production. The experience of the progressive **90s Channel**, which was kicked off **TCI** systems in November of 1995 and replaced with conservative offerings, is a taste of what non-commercial, alternative voices can expect from our increasingly concentrated media conglomerates.

Two organizations, **UPPNet** and **Free Speech TV**, take the need for national distribution of labor's message very seriously, and are working together to present labor programming on cable systems using access channels and public access producers.

Free Speech TV is a new programming service with its roots in the 90s

Channel experience, and it offers a four-hour block of programming for free to cable systems around the country. One of the regular pieces within that block is a section of labor programs curated by **UPPNet**. **UPPNet** is the **Union Producers and Programmers' Network**, an independent organization of labor access producers formed in 1989 to promote labor access TV and share programming among producers.

**Fred Carroll**, Chair of **UPPNet**, places the number of stations showing the **FSTV** programming at 50 nationwide, with more being added. Although the Free Speech TV experiment is limited, and programs are bicycled rather than sent via satellite, **Carroll** is excited by the prospect of national distribution of labor programming.

**Carroll** and other **UPPNet** members hope this sample of labor access, representing some of the best labor access shows in existence, will provide evidence and momentum for the labor movement to take the possibility of a national cable satellite labor channel seriously.

**Carroll** encourages all labor producers to join **UPPNet**, which provides a bimonthly newsletter and an electronic conference on labor access issues on the internet. **UPPNet** also co-sponsors a semi-annual conference on technology and global labor issues called **LaborTech**, which this year is being planned for St. Petersburg, Russia. To join **UPPNet**, to find out about their **FSTV** partnership, or about **LaborTech**, write **UPPNet**, c/o **UFCW** Local 1442, P.O. Box 1750, Santa Monica, CA, 90406. Or call (310) 395-9977.

**FSTV** is also a venue for access producers who want national distribution for their programming. Among other regular programs on **FSTV** are series like *America's Defense Monitor*, *Globalvision's Rights and Wrongs*, and

*Greenpeace's Making Waves Close to Home*. For access supporters interested in having Free Speech TV programming

on their own access channel, or inquiring about having their program distributed by **FSTV**, call (303) 442-8445 or write P.O. Box 6060, Boulder, Colorado, 80306. You can e-mail **FSTV** at [fstv@freespeech.org](mailto:fstv@freespeech.org). The "hotline" is (303) 649-6411.

*Sally Alvarez is Editor-in-Chief of this issue of CMR.*



## LaborTECH

## Who's Doing Labor Programming?

Continued from page 11

**Minnesota At Work**  
**John See, Randy Croce,**  
**Howard Kling**  
**Labor Education Service**  
University of Minnesota  
271 19th Avenue South  
#437  
Minneapolis, MN 55455  
612-624-4326

**The Working Channel**  
**Sam Stark**  
**Solidarity House (UAW)**  
8000 E. Jefferson  
Detroit, MI 48214  
313-926-5474

**This Working Life**  
**Keith Skotnes**  
17100 Pioneer Blvd  
Artesia, CA 90701  
310-402-1771

**Profiles of Labor**  
**Richard Taliaferro**  
6942 22nd St.  
Rio Linda, CA 95673  
916-991-5431

**Ohio AFL-CIO Video**  
**News**  
**Joe Weidner**  
255 Binns Boulevard  
Columbus, Ohio 43204

**Carpentry Today**  
**Jack Whalen**  
**Carpenter's Union Local**  
**40**  
Cambridge, Massachusetts  
02138  
617-547-8511

**Labor On the Job**  
**Steve Zeltzer**  
**Labor Video Project**  
P.O. Box 425584  
San Francisco, CA. 94142  
415-641-4440



## Dateline: Biddeford, Maine

# Labor's Voice Heard in Maine

by Mike Cavanaugh

Here in Maine we've developed a more-or-less regular weekly labor talk show which we've managed to supply to 8 or 10 local public access stations. Largely through the close collaboration of a progressive public access producer and a couple of us in the regional office of UNITE!, we've developed the ability to produce a variety of shows featuring "labor stories" or public policy issues from a labor perspective.

For nearly three years we've been producing shows either in the UNITE office (talk show/discussion format) or "on the road," taking our camera and host to the statehouse, plant gate, demonstration, or whatever venue strikes us as interesting. Occasionally we will incorporate some video clips into our production from sources like LIPA, *We Do the Work*, organizing videos, or other sources, to provide background for discussion/analysis with our on-camera

guests. Richard Rhames of the Biddeford Public Access Corporation and I are the production crew and show host. Sue Veit, a former local union president from UNITE has spent many long hours contacting program directors from around the state and coordinating the copying,

mailing, and circulation of our videotapes.

We try to produce shows that will be interesting to an audience beyond the core constituency of labor activists. If anything, I guess my goal is to expose a "labor perspective" as a legitimate viewpoint on issues to as broad an audience as possible. While success in achieving that goal is

impossible to measure, we are always mindful of the fact that we (unfortunately) have this field to ourselves...there's not a lot of competition.

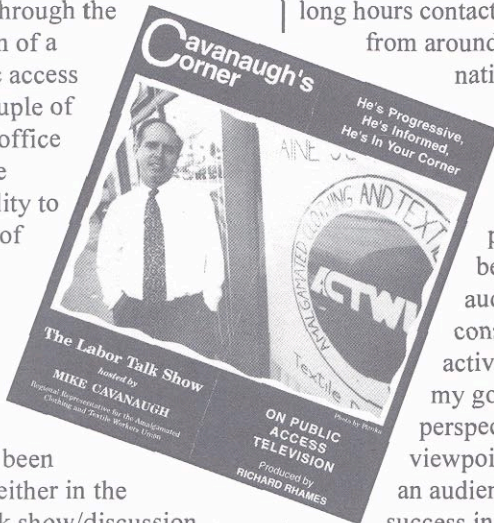
While it's always hard to know if you're really reaching anyone out there, we've found a growing awareness of the show demonstrated by occasional requests from aspiring political leaders for expo-

sure on camera and the interests expressed by local union members when shows are about and feature them. A few calls to the office from members inquiring about "exactly when is that show about our contract on" does wonders for our spirits and gets us out there to produce more shows. A local broadcast affiliate asked for a representative from our show to serve on a panel for a televised debate with a local political candidate. We know that the opportunity to present labor's viewpoint in that instance would not have come without the exposure provided by our access show. There are a few cable access programmers who ask for our videos, as we try to meet their needs for reliable and interesting programming.

We hope that we are inspiring other labor activists to make use of the medium of TV by producing "our story" for public access. More than inspiration is necessary, however...use of this medium needs to be part of a strategic plan if we are ever to be heard through the din and roar of corporate culture.

*Mike Cavanaugh is the Regional Director of UNITE in Biddeford, Maine. He has been co-producing Cavanaugh's Corner since 1992.*

(See related photo on page 28.)



## Hometown Ceremony and Highlights

# 1995 Videotapes Now Available



### 1995 Hometown Video Festival Awards Ceremony Videotape

Alliance Members: ☐ \$45 (VHS) ☐ \$100 (3/4")

Non-members: ☐ \$75 (VHS) ☐ \$150 (3/4")

### 1995 Hometown Video Festival Highlights Videotape

Alliance Members: ☐ \$120 (VHS) ☐ \$150 (3/4")

Non-members: ☐ \$160 (VHS) ☐ \$200 (3/4")

Payment must accompany order. Please include order with check and mail to the Alliance for Community Media, 666 11th St. NW, Washington, DC 20001-4542

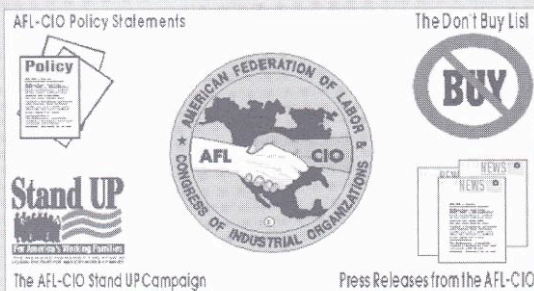


# *Labor Institute of Public Affairs*

## Resources and Services for Labor Access Producers

### *Labor on the World Wide Web*

Public access television is only one way the labor movement is getting its message out. In spite of a relatively late start in using new technologies, the AFL-CIO and individual unions like the **Communication Workers of America (CWA)** and **IBEW** (electrical workers) are embracing the information age. Several years ago, the AFL-CIO introduced **LaborNet**<sup>1</sup> a computer bulletin board with access normally restricted to union staff. The general public and any union member can find information, legislative and contract issues, boycott news, and lots more on the AFL-CIO web site at <http://www.aflcio.org>. For more information, contact **Rick Castor** at (202) 637-5000.



*The AFL-CIO web site provides information to thousands of interested individuals and organizations worldwide.*

<sup>1</sup> Not to be confused with IGC's LaborNet, open to all subscribers. Info: [labornet-info@igc.apc.org](mailto:labornet-info@igc.apc.org)

by Sally Alvarez

**T**he Labor Institute of Public Affairs (LIPA) was created in 1982 by the AFL-CIO in an effort to "give the labor movement a permanent, consistent, visible, and effective voice in the electronic media." Originally given generous funding and an ambitious mission, it initiated a 10-week cable pilot project in 1983 called **Cableline**, a series of public affairs labor programs that appeared on

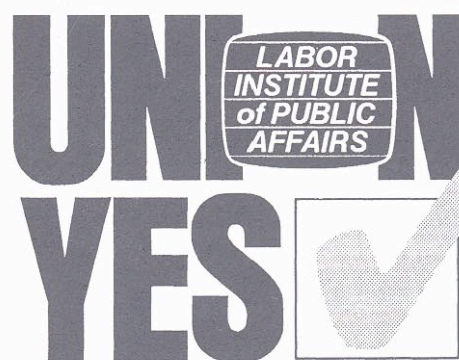
cable systems in three major markets: Atlanta, Pittsburgh, and Seattle. This program was hailed by labor supporters and access activists as a hopeful sign that the AFL-CIO would be aggressively embracing new technologies like cable to get its message out. Unfortunately this never materialized, although over the years many labor access producers have found sympathetic help and support from LIPA's staff on an individual basis.

Although LIPA's mission and funding had been curtailed in recent years, labor producers are optimistic that the recent change in leadership at the AFL-CIO will promote a more active relationship between labor access producers and LIPA. The new AFL-CIO top leadership have openly stated their commitment to organizing, political action, and communication, and this will hopefully mean more resources and effort in all media, including local public access cable.

LIPA's **Karla Garland** estimates that there are around 20 labor-oriented radio shows around

the country, including several that are syndicated across states, like *America's Workforce* in Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan, and *Prospering America*, broadcast in New York state.

Garland estimates 35-plus public access labor shows are being produced under a variety of arrangements. She encourages all labor producers to contact her to be put on the LIPA mailing list so that they will receive regular updates of LIPA's resources, including video news releases that



can be rolled into local programs. Garland also encourages producers to use the video collection available at LIPA. "Many of our older videos are very good; they have a long shelf life," Garland states, referring to videos on labor history, member training, and issues like imports, health care, and health and safety. Garland goes on to say, "We also have B-roll footage that many producers find useful, like shots of people working in certain industries, or at rallies." Garland says LIPA generally sends footage in Betacam or 3/4" formats. While materials sent to labor producers are usually free, LIPA can also provide services like creating opening graphics or music, with cost discussed on an individual basis. A complete catalog of LIPA's offerings can be obtained by writing LIPA, AFL-CIO, 815 16th St. NW, Room 206, Washington, DC, 20006.

*Sally Alvarez is Editor-in-Chief of this issue of CMR.*



## *Dateline: Boston, Massachusetts*

# Independent Producer Challenges Labor And Access

by Tony Chapin

In 1992, I produced a tape that dealt with the closing of a small factory in Dover, New Hampshire. The company, **Clarostat**, had been running in the black for many years with good quality control. It made electronic elements for other industries. Late in 1991 a large

British conglomerate, **BTR**, bought out Clarostat and hired a management team from

Providence, Rhode Island to run it. Four months later, on Valentine's Day, 1992, they posted notice of the closing on the employee bulletin board. The work was being shipped to the Mexican maquiladora.

Using footage of the town, the mill, the schools, interviews with dislocated workers, and a studio segment with workers, a labor reporter, and a **Harvard Business School** professor, the final show was edited to 30 minutes, and is called *The Runaway Shop*.

The president of the **IUE** local had spoken of a viewing for the finished tape

at the Dover Library. He was scheduled to be in on the studio discussion, but had begged off at the last minute. I thought I had better show the finished tape to the New England **IUE** District, but he turned down my offer to preview it at his office. Strange to say, the Dover local's president

now said he couldn't find a spot for it at the viewing in Dover.

I was an innocent producer. I did not realize the extent to which

union leadership—and this

goes for just about any union—does not welcome efforts it does not control. The corporate structure of command seems to have infiltrated the labor movement.

Union management sees any spontaneous initiative as a potential threat to its authority, and ultimately, to its grip on secure, well-paid positions. As **Tom Geoghegan** says in *Which Side Are You On*, union officials have come a long way and anyone who steps out of line may at best be looking at a job back on the shop floor, without seniority. None of the various union hierarchies wants to harbor

an independent in its bosom.

The unions do have their own house organs and video infomercials, but these are a one-way street. The labor establishment is not interested in having a real back and forth dialogue with their rank and file, or with the working public as a whole, whether organized or not. Of course, this is why unions are becoming irrelevant in the public eye.

The job of free communication, therefore, falls by default to independent publishers and TV producers. And of all the different means of communication available to us, the only funded avenue exempt from corporate influence—supported by Act of Congress and maintained by force of contract in the municipalities—is community cable access television. Access TV provides channels through which we are free to express truths that the corporate world does not generally want advertised, whether those truths address the conditions of work, justice, health care, the environment, or the electoral process itself.

Now to the point. Many of our access stations are managed by people who

See *Independent*, page 30...

"...the only funded avenue exempt from corporate influence...is community cable access television."

## *Dateline: Rhode Island*

# Rhode Island LaborVision

by Chuck Schwartz

The Rhode Island Institute for Labor Studies and Research, a non-profit adult and labor education institution, has produced *Rhode Island LaborVision* since 1986. The Institute's one-hour program is simultaneously broadcast three times a week on every cable system in Rhode Island. It can be viewed by more than two-thirds of the population of the state. More than three-quarters of the programs shown on *LaborVision* are produced by Institute staff. Many of the programs were recorded at Institute workshops and conferences, thereby enabling these educational programs to reach many more people than were actually in attendance.

In addition, *Rhode Island LaborVision* covers the events of the labor movement in Rhode Island, including strikes, picket



lines, rallies, and meetings. Also featured are programs produced by the national **AFL-CIO's Labor Institute for Public Affairs (LIPA)**, national unions, and other videos of interest to workers on topics such as discrimination, labor history, and health and safety.

The Institute is always looking for new programs about working people to show on its cable television program. For more information, call **Chuck Schwartz** at 401-463-9900 or write the Institute for Labor Studies, 99 Bald Hill Road, Cranston, R.I. 02920.

*Chuck Schwartz works at the Rhode Island Institute for Labor and Research, where he produces Rhode Island Labor Vision.*



## Labor Access Goes International

# Workers' Voices In The Global Economy

by Steve Zeltzer

The globalization of the world economy and its reordering to suit the economic interests of the multinationals of the world has at the same time brought an increasing internationalization of working class struggles. The picketing of **Bridgestone/Firestone** corporate headquarters in Tokyo is a recent example of workers who must battle their employers in their own countries and then must take their fight to the home base of the corporation itself. While members of **United Steel Workers of America** (formerly **United Rubber Workers**) picketed the Bridgestone/Firestone offices with a large paper maché of **Mother Jones**, Japanese labor video producers were interviewing them and preparing a video tape that can be used to tell Japanese workers of their struggle.

These Japanese labor videographers, like others around the world, are opening the way to the growing use of labor video, computers and other technologies in an effort to challenge the corporate media monopoly. From Korea and Japan to India, England and Mexico, more and more labor communication unionists and activists are using these tools to educate and organize on an international level.

Japan offers several impressive examples of independent labor video. **Akira Matsubara** of **Video Press** began his first video about his victimization at a factory and his struggle to oppose it. Matsubara went on to establish a production group that has produced labor videos on the privatisation of Japan railways (*Mass Layoffs In Japan Rail*) and the attempted privatisation of Tokyo sanitation workers. He has also produced videos on the history of Korean workers in Japan and the education system. Matsubara also helped establish a network called **Alternative Media** that helps independent and alternative media activists not only in Japan but in Asia.

An example of the need for independent labor video production was around the video *Document Karoshi* produced by

the **Ogawamchi Cine-Club** in Tokyo. The club members had sought to get a documentary from the public television system **NHK** on the disease *Karoshi* (death from overwork). NHK said they did not have

Hindus and Muslims. This video was banned by the government and only allowed to be distributed after an international political campaign.

In England, the leading woman labor videographer is **Anne Marie Sweeney**. She produced her first video on the struggle to protect **Oxford Day Care Centers** for the children and the unionists who staffed the facilities. Sweeney since has gone on to produce videos not only about workers in the United Kingdom but also about the condition of women workers in Brazil. A number of these videos have been programmed on **ITV4**, including *The Women Of 10 Downing Street* and *Sisters of The Amazon* about women unionists in the Amazon. The effort to fund and expand labor video production is ongoing.

Just as in the United States, even professionally produced labor videos have great difficulty getting national programming. Britain does not have community access cable, and Sweeney is one of the few producers who has been able to get her videos on one of the national television networks. During the 1978 miners strike, the film and video unions produced a series of tapes called *The Miners' Tapes*. These exposed the capitalist media's witch hunt against the miners and their leader, **Arthur Scargill**. These tapes were never programmed on British national television.

One area that has been valuable to labor videographers around the world has been the use of computer networks to help publicize and broadcast their works. Electronic lists such as **list.labor**, **Labor History** and others have been a useful means to let educators know about these videos. Further, the development of the **World Wide Web** now allows labor video makers to publicize their videos throughout the world. *We Do The Work*, which produces a monthly **PBS** labor show with a magazine format, has developed a **WWW** page and others are fast at work on developing this tool.

**LaborNet-IGC** is based in the United States. See *Workers' Voices*, page 29...



Photo courtesy Sally Alvarez

Steve Zeltzer (far left) with members of a union and university delegation from Nagoya, Japan.

any such material. These video activists then went to **Tokyo TV** and **Fuji TV** and in each case discovered that there was nothing available. They were eventually told that these television networks could not produce a documentary on this subject because they would have to mention **Toyota**, **Fuji Bank** and other major corporations who were responsible for many of the *Karoshi* deaths. In response, the club members produced the first video in the world on this subject and it was eventually distributed in over 500 video stores throughout Japan.

In India, labor videographer **Philip Padichira** of the video group **Camera** based in Bombay produced a video on the history of struggle of the **TVS** workers in Madras, India to form an independent trade union (*We Make History*). The company went to court and was able to get a court order banning the programming of the video as well as blocking its licensing.

The company prevented the video from being used to show the unionization struggle and prevented the raising of funds both for the video and for union support activities.

This repression continued in 1995 when Padichira produced a video on the causes of the ethnic fratricide between the



# Labor Television Beyond the Beltway

Continued from page 13

quences of that meeting. UPIU 7837, the locked-out local, is now distributing *Our Class of People*, and I think one reason is that it helps to explain their complex environment.

*Our Class of People* represents a new stage in the genre of labor television *Labor*

*Beat* produces, which can be described as nano-budget, small-format, fast-turnaround.

We were able to get footage from a variety of rank-and-file sources covering different aspects of the Staley lock-out, thereby enabling us to tell a complicated story involving interrelated events. **Archer Daniels Midland** workers from Quebec (ADM is the parent company of A.E. Staley) gave us footage showing that this was a battle that extends beyond the borders of the U.S.; **Labor Video Project** in San Francisco taped Staley worker Mike Griffin's trip to Slovakia to address an international workers' conference there; *Labor Beat* camera people **Steve Dalber**, **Paul Donahue** and **David Chaytor** taped 7,000-strong labor marches in Decatur; and Jerry Fergusson covered the Bal Harbor trip. As the Staley struggle itself expanded beyond Decatur, Illinois to Canada, Florida and Europe, we were able to follow all this action, and show it to our viewers in a way that connected all these events.

*Labor Beat*, like other labor tv producers around the country, is doing a lot of networking in this way. The trend now within the labor movement is increasing solidarity among different unions—among **Teamsters**, steelworkers, service employees, government workers. The growth of **Jobs with Justice** (our producer **Jean Darling** did a video, *Organize!*, about them in Chicago) is certainly an example of this inter-union cooperation movement.

This trend in solidarity is reflected among labor TV activists. And key labor battles such as the Illinois War Zone struggle have accelerated this networking.

**St. Louis LaborVision**, for example, has grown during the Decatur labor

struggle and become one of the key labor TV shows in the country, through the energies of **Rose Feurer** and her merry band. When **LaborVision** covered the infamous peppergassing of peaceful demonstrators in Decatur, they mobilized all the footage of that event from numerous labor TV activists present,

and hammered out in little over a week a history-making labor video *Struggle in the Heartland*, which was seen on *Labor Beat*.

During the big October '94 rally in Decatur, where some 7,000 marchers participated, *LaborVision* and *Labor Beat* crews decided to loosely coordinate their coverage. But bringing two "teams" together from different cities at different times at an event where there were thousands of people created logistical problems. So we all got walkie-talkie headsets, picked a common channel ahead of time, and found each other in a very big crowd. The UAW's *Mountain Climber* video crew from Peoria also had given us a CB channel they would be on. About six labor TV cameras from three out-of-town groups were in common radio contact within minutes.

When we began in October to make a show about the fight for new leadership in the AFL-CIO, much of the groundwork for it had already been done with *Our Class of People*. Our work in following the War Zone struggle led us to the conclusion that the contest between **Thomas R. Donahue** and **John Sweeney** for the leadership of the AFL-CIO could not be fully understood by exclusively looking at

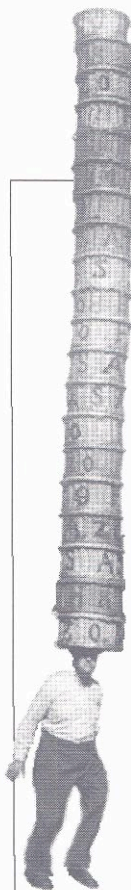
the surface messages of these two candidates. The facade of business-as-usual of the old **Kirkland** leadership was breaking up because of growing pressures deep within the rank-and-file; the Illinois War Zone upsurge and events like the San Francisco newspaper strike were sending the signal that U.S. workers were getting sick of give-backs and labor-management cooperation circles.

Putting a labor series together in Chicago has certain advantages, and when the AFL-CIO held an executive board meeting at the **Drake Hotel** here where both candidates officially began their campaigns, cameraperson **Steve Dalber** and I were down there for press conferences, shots of the executive council meeting just breaking up, and B-roll hoopla.

The candidates' political machinations and the constitutional ground rules involved made for a complex story, however. But fortunately veteran labor educator **Harry Kelber** was also at the hotel, and a long interview with him provided us with the necessary clear explanation of what was happening, and gave us a structural "backbone" upon which the various other elements would be assembled. The video was finished in about three weeks. That gave us time to

Continued on next page...

"bringing two 'teams' together...at an event where there were thousands of people created logistical problems."



Having difficulty managing all the new FCC cable regulations?

## Cable TV LawManager™

The leading computer rules service for the cable industry.

For all PCs running Microsoft® Windows™.

Basic subscription-6 updates a year-just \$195. Priority subscription-10 updates a year-only \$295.

Satisfaction guaranteed.

Use what hundreds of government officials, cable executives, consultants and attorneys use.

Includes full text of...

- ◆ **FCC Rules**  
Parts 11, 17, 25, 76 and 78.
- ◆ **Cable Act of 1992**  
with legislative history.
- ◆ **Cable Act of 1984**  
as modified by '92 Cable Act.
- ◆ **FCC reports and orders**  
implementing the '92 Cable Act.
- ◆ **FCC Q&As, cable letters, rate forms and more...**  
the details you need to understand the fast-changing FCC cable policy.

**etrok**

1550 North Fuller Avenue  
Suite 305  
Los Angeles, CA 90046  
**1-800-883-8765**

Microsoft is a registered trademark and Windows is a trademark of Microsoft Corp. Cable TV LawManager is a trademark of etrok. Copyright © 1995 etrok. All rights reserved.



# Labor Television (cont'd)

Continued from previous page

get it out and cablecast before the AFL-CIO convention in late October. It was one of those ideal projects where everything worked the way it was supposed to. Now *The Fight for Leadership* is being publicized in the national labor publication *Labor Notes*. And even though the convention is over I believe the video is still very useful because it explains the underlying processes

that lead to the rejection of the past leadership in the AFL-CIO.

**"Prado Pacayal is about a village in Zapatista territory which was trashed by the Mexican military."**

I attended for *Labor Beat* the AFL-CIO 1995 Convention in New York...with a press pass, and not as a delegate. Along with a number of other labor video producers—such as Howard Kling (University of Minnesota Labor Education), Steve Zeltzer (Labor Video Project), Simin Farkhondeh (*Labor at the Crossroads*), Chuck Schwartz (*Rhode Island Labor Vision*), and Elsa Rassbach (Made

in USA Productions)—*Labor Beat* will be digesting interviews, speeches and B-roll from this convention in future shows. As the new Sweeney leadership begins to take hold the real character of the 'new' AFL-CIO will begin to take shape.

As this process evolves, a militant rank-and-file upsurge continues to strengthen. The picket-line battle at the Detroit newspaper strike is a particularly dramatic example. Although there is no regular labor-TV series in Detroit at this time, that struggle has brought forward labor videographers in the Detroit area who either produced great footage or edited shows. *Peoples Video Network*, although based in New York City, put out a good, fast-turnaround video about the strike, the first one out of the gate. And *Labor Beat* edited two separate pieces (*Skirmish in Sterling Heights*, and *A Night in Detroit*) using footage from autoworker Ron Maxwell and videographer Mike Dreiling.

While *Labor Beat* is assembling footage and editing its own coverage of stories, getting videos from other producers around the country, and internationally, buys us the time to do this. Putting on Peoples Video Network's *Showdown in Motown* is just one example.

Earlier this year a group of Mexican video producers (Leopoldo Rodriguez and Elliott Young of Quihubo Videos, to name only two) put out some timely and dramatic pieces, and we jumped at the chance to put them on because they had either been subtitled or dubbed in English, and they covered events that had only just recently happened. *Prado Pacayal* is about a village in Zapatista territory which was trashed by the Mexican military. *Todos Somos Marcos* ("We Are All Marcos") documented an enormous anti-government rally in Mexico City.

Both of these videos address the issue of class exploitation in Mexico. The message coming out of Mexico was that—even despite the economic difficulties—low-budget, fast-turnaround edited pieces translated for North American audiences are not just a nice idea, but a reality. This is a very important step which

Continued on next page...

## Do what's right. Do it right.



## Do it right now.

### MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT FORM

(Please check all that apply)

Yes, I want to join the Alliance for Community Media. I am a(n):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access Staff Member | <input type="checkbox"/> Access Board Member                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Producer  | <input type="checkbox"/> Cable Regulatory Staff or Board Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other               |   |

### ORGANIZATIONAL

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Over \$100,000 annual revenues .....        | \$305 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10,000 to \$100,000 annual revenues ..... | \$195 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under \$10,000 annual revenues .....        | \$85  |

All organizational memberships expire on September 30th of each year. Join between April and September and pay half the annual rate.

### INDIVIDUAL

Affiliated is available only if your organization is a member: includes paid staff, volunteer producers, board members or other unpaid individuals associated with a member organization.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Affiliated:</b>                      | <b>At-Large:</b>                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Staff \$40     | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff \$85     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer \$30 | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer \$35 |

All individual memberships expire one year from the last day of the month in which you join.

### SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION

I am including an additional amount to further support the activities of the Alliance and help broaden participation in the organization.

☐ \$10   ☐ \$15   ☐ \$25   ☐ \$40   ☐ \$50   ☐ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### SUBSCRIPTION ONLY (not a membership)

☐ Community Media Review (6 issues) \$35

(Canada \$45, other non-U.S. \$55) CMR Subscriptions expire one year from the last day of the month in which you sign up.

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
NAME AND ADDRESS (Please print)

Membership name (individual or organization)

Contact Person (organizational members only)

Mailing Address

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of organization of affiliation (affiliated members only)

### TYPE OF ORGANIZATION

- |                                     |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit  | <input type="checkbox"/> Educational institution | <input type="checkbox"/> Library                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Cable system            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other for-profit organization |

### TYPE OF FACILITY

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public access     | <input type="checkbox"/> Educational access | <input type="checkbox"/> Government access |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local origination | <input type="checkbox"/> Leased access      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other             |

### DEMOGRAPHICS (individual members only)

This optional information will help us to better serve current and potential members.

- |  |                                |                                   |  |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black           | <input type="checkbox"/> White | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Native American | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Female   | <input type="checkbox"/> Male                      |

Mail check or money order payable to Alliance for Community Media, 666 11th St. NW, Suite 806, Washington, DC 20001-4542



# Labor Television Beyond the Beltway

Continued from previous page

North American workers should fathom as we now confront the damages created by NAFTA and the crises of the Mexican political economy. This technological development has also been reflected in the increased use of electronic

cyberspace by pro-labor, pro-Zapatista organizations in Mexico. The so-called "Third World" proletariat is gearing up for the 21st Century. It's a comforting thought.

As I said at the beginning of this article, 1995 has been a busy and fascinating year for labor television. Can we reduce into a few words what it all means?

First, the encrusted, moribund AFL-CIO leadership of **Lane Kirkland** has been replaced by the Sweeney leadership, which brings along with it raised expectations in an environment of increasing labor fight-back. The Sweeney team has pledged to greatly increase organizing expenditures and has a record of enthusiasm for street actions and picket-line militancy. These factors, as well as the political pros and cons of the new Sweeney leadership, will be areas to watch in labor video journalism in the next year.

Whilst organized labor begins to wake up from its labor-management cooperation slumber under the Kirkland years, at the same time corporate television (and television news) will be lurching even further to the right, slamming the door even harder on working-class points of view in commercial (and public) television.

Organized labor will have to come up with a strategy for a national labor-TV network, probably along the lines of a satellite cable-TV channel. As the new Sweeney team evaluates the **Labor Institute for Public Affairs** (the labor-TV production arm of the AFL-CIO) and what will be done with it, the experience of **Labor Beat** and other producers in the U.S. could be instructive.

Our ten-year stint in covering stories in the Midwest (Chicago, Decatur and

Detroit) convinces us that, as the labor battle lines pop up, talented and dependable videographers will emerge from the ranks who will provide footage closest to the issues and action. And they will get those interviews from those folks who

very often understand what's going on better than their representatives hundreds of miles away. The good footage is out there, but what must be overcome in developing a national strategy within the AFL-CIO for that footage is the aversion at the top to its rank-and-file content.

Whereas LIPA staff in Washington, D.C. are certainly of the highest professional quality, the Kirkland outlook in the past year prevented LIPA—forced to follow the line of the AFL-CIO tops—from developing much relevant labor television.

The exceptions, such as *The Power of Sisterhood: CLUW*, were largely due to the inherent talent of the LIPA staff. But often what would be produced were well-crafted PR pieces for the AFL-CIO's promotion of labor-management cooperation 'partnerships.' Our viewers in the Midwest—who had been following the War Zone struggle—would have found such messages false and alien. Frequently, getting shows like this in the mail from LIPA were like getting a nice new car with a beautiful new paint job...but with the wheels put on sideways.

Up until the big shake-up at the 1995 Convention, throughout the duration of the Staley lock-out, LIPA did not produce a single video in support of that War Zone Struggle, the most important labor battle in the United States during that period! In fact, **Thomas R. Donahue**, Kirkland's groomed successor, referred off-the-record to the Staley workers as "troublemakers." As a result, LIPA understood the Staley workers as "troublemakers." Meanwhile, every labor video producer outside Washington, D.C. was making videos or programming videos supporting the Decatur, Illinois workers. Thousands of

copies of *St. Louis LaborVision's Struggle in the Heartland* were being distributed around the country by the real trade unionists, the ones outside the beltway who work on the assembly line and walk the picket line and stand in the unemployment line. Likewise, while groups like Peoples Video Network were cranking out within two weeks on a zero budget video reports on the Detroit newspaper strike, LIPA did not produce one single video about that strike. (On the eve of the October convention, when it was becoming apparent that the old Donahue, i.e. Kirkland, leadership was heading for the wastepaper-basket, LIPA put together a solidarity tape which included scenes from Detroit, Decatur, and so forth. Better late than never.)

An important stage in the future evolution of national labor TV will be in changing how editorial decisions are made within the AFL-CIO. *Labor Beat* and other labor shows around the country have demonstrated that labor television needs to be driven by rank-and-file needs, and that means footage from the field. But more than that, labor TV needs to be edited by workers and locals who know what the truth is and are not bashful about telling it. It's been said before, but it apparently needs to be said again: your relationship to production certainly ends up being reflected in the views you have and the messages you put out. Labor video edited inside a hermetically sealed chamber is going to be D.O.A., regardless of how much money and technical skill goes into it. Hopefully, the Kirkland school of labor television is now history. The next decade could get interesting.

*Larry Duncan is a member of the Communication Workers of America, Local 14408 in Chicago, Illinois. His organization, Committee for Labor Access, has produced video, radio and print materials in support of workers' struggles since 1986. Labor Beat, the CLA labor access show, is affiliated with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 1220. It is one of the most widely distributed labor programs in the country.*

**"Labor video edited inside a hermetically sealed chamber is going to be D.O.A., regardless of how much money and technical skill goes into it."**



# Minnesota at Work is *Labor Access at its Best*

Continued from page 9

owner **Curt Carlson**. If they're concerned about our show, we figure we must be doing something right.

Our cable show is an important forum because programs reach this wide variety of viewers, many of whom would not otherwise hear a pro-labor viewpoint. This makes it an important tool for influencing public opinion. In one case, the editor of a large weekly newspaper happened to see a show about the struggle at the **Minneapolis Radisson Plaza Hotel**. Employees had been trying to get a contract for over seven years. He was moved to write a cover-story article on the issue and did an editorial on a local public TV show. As a result of the shows and article, former managers and a city council member gave affidavits in the **NLRB** case against the business and the billionaire hotel owner was subpoenaed. The tape was later used as evidence in a contempt-of-court hearing against the employer and was quoted when the city council refused the hotel's refinancing request, due in part to the treatment of employees documented in the video.

Appearing on a cable TV show has given greater credibility to unions and individuals in the opinions of both

supporters and opponents. Staff of **HERE Local 17**, who had been featured in four **MAW** cable programs, got supportive phone calls and recognition from rank-and-file members and unionists in other locals, proud that the union's cause had been presented on TV.

Surprisingly, these cablecasts also earned respect from employer negotiators who remarked that they had seen the labor representatives on TV. Employers saw how strong and determined the union appeared in several programs and how poorly the management's rationale for its actions came across. Union leaders believe that concern for such potentially bad public relations (especially in hotels, dependent on public patronage) played a role in persuading businesses to come to a bargained resolution with the local.

We've found that the very presence of a video camera can boost the morale of workers and aggravate, even unnerve, management. Just showing up with a camera is an effective tactic. It lets workers know that what they are doing is important to record and show other

people.

On the other hand, one employer negotiator was so angry when he found an **LES** crew hadn't left a hotel as soon as he ordered them out that, in a fit of spite, he

invited them to tape a bargaining session.

He was so affected by the taping that he took more

extreme positions than

usual and insulted employees. Bargaining committee members, who had formerly given this negotiator the benefit of the doubt, said this performance "unmasked" him, and it reinforced their support for the union's bargaining position. This impact was multiplied when a much larger audience of employees and the public saw the finished program.

In addition to the success of the regular cablecasts, we find it's also necessary to get our programs to certain targeted audiences by more direct means. Some issues, such as a local's bargaining position, are not appropriate to the larger cable channel audience of other unions' members and the general public. Only 40 percent of union members in our area

Continued on next page...

**"The tape was later used as evidence in a contempt-of-court hearing..."**

The most detailed compilation of access organizations in the United States!

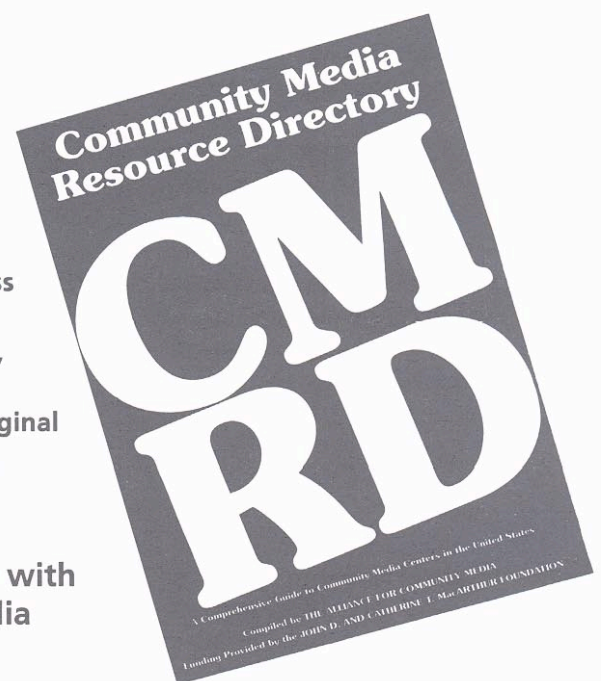
## Community Media Resource Directory

- ◆ Almost 1,000 listings of public, educational, and government access organizations throughout America and the world
- ◆ Listings are arranged by state and include address, contact person, telephone number, fax number and e-mail address
- ◆ Each entry includes type of organization, budget size, hours of original programming, area population, number of subscribers, and more!

Alliance Members: ☐ \$40      Non-members: ☐ \$60

Payment must accompany order. Please include order with check and mail to the Alliance for Community Media  
666 11th St. NW, Washington, DC 20001-4542

Funding provided by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation





# Minnesota at Work is Labor Access at its Best

Continued from previous page

receive cable, and others may not be able to watch the programs at the times they are cablecast. So it's important to bring media to people in other ways.

Unions have showed *MAW* programs, as well as shorter tapes, at union meetings, rallies and on organizing house calls (just as unions showed films as long ago as the 1920s). These group showings can increase the impact of a tape through an introduction by a person the viewers know and who can relate it to immediate concerns and events. Seeing the program in a group, which may clap or cheer during the showing, can also add to the excitement viewers feel about the show. In some cases, unions have used videos to "fire up" a crowd, who immediately after the presentation have signed up for picket duty or staged a march.

In some instances giving or mailing tapes to particular people has proved to be the best strategy. For example, in organizing campaigns, there may be little opportunity to get workers together. Mailing tapes to employees allows them to watch at home, away from the intimidating presence of supervisors or unsympathetic fellow workers.

In cases where workers cannot read or speak English well, tapes with sections in their own languages have been critical communication tools for organizers. Tapes have also been given to city council members or management negotiators.

LES has developed an initiative called **Worker Action Media** to create grassroots programs for particular union efforts, such as strikes and organizing campaigns, which not only feature workers, but involve them in planning, shooting and scripting videos. An effort is made to include as many participants as possible. Some sequences run much longer than standard TV, but are of great interest to participants. Workers shoot all or part of many of these shows themselves, and the

camera work and lighting is fairly rough.

But we have found this very lack of slickness is an asset in these situations, because these tapes are seen as more "authentic." These are not "top-down" productions with special effects and a

programs to their audiences.

Our LES experience convinces us that small-scale distribution of tapes to crucial specific audiences together with cablecast to a more general viewership have been effective arms of union campaigns. While

video is certainly not a substitute for person-to-person organizing, labor can definitely use this medium to build internal and public support.

Many of us making labor video for cable access choose this forum because we don't have the money to jump the financial, technical and political hurdles imposed by broadcast TV. But there are also positive advantages that make small-scale media more effective for some purposes than trying to get our message across the network airwaves.

Labor should not cede the mass media to pro-business interests entirely. There is a time and place when getting mainstream media coverage is important, as when an

action like a bus strike directly affects the public. **Charlotte Ryan's** *Prime Time Activism: Media Strategies for Grassroots Organizing* is an excellent guide on how to garner positive mainstream media attention for such occasions. But, as Ryan and others warn, attracting commercial network or even public TV reporters takes a lot of time and energy, with uncertain results. And in most cases, creating our

own labor programs for

broadcast is prohibitively expensive.

We have to be realistic about how to invest our limited

resources. Cable

access offers an affordable

way for labor to communicate its message.

*Randy Croce works at the Labor Education Service at the University of Minnesota. He recently completed his master's degree; his thesis focused on the rhetoric of labor videos and their uses in organizing.*



Photo courtesy Minnesota at Work

**Howard Kling (camera) and Randy Croce (audio) interviewing UAW members Irene Kowal and Mary Flowers about the five-year struggle to get a contract at a Hudson's store in Michican.**

narrator explaining the point of the program. Instead, these videos show working conditions, union actions and, most importantly, workers talking to other workers. We find these videos are persuasive because viewers can identify with the subjects and points they make. Despite small audience numbers, we believe these programs are more effective than mass network programs could be in advancing local unions' goals.

In at least three

instances, workers tell us such videos have made the difference in winning work plant elections and in

defeating a decertification vote. We think that the specifically tailored issues and technical quality of some of the programs would not keep a general cable audience interested and don't intend to air them. But some of these shows or reedited versions of them have been very compelling and have appeared on *Minnesota At Work*. We believe producers need to be sensitive about matching the form and content of

**"...this very lack of slickness is an asset in these situations, because these tapes are seen as more 'authentic.'"**



# Do You Have a Labor Program on Your Community Channel?

Continued from page 7

the Vietnam War, and generally resisted

efforts to promote women and people of color into top positions. The AFL-CIO leadership wrote off much of the activism of the sixties and seventies as destructive and unpatriotic. Too many activists wrote off the labor movement as reactionary and undemocratic, without appreciating that all unions are not the same, and that leading a membership organization is a complex and difficult task. A second reason may be that many unions tended to be suspicious of the media in general, often

treating reporters with hostility or ignoring them. Several access producers report in these pages how much effort it took to convince their union leadership that access was different from commercial TV.

With the changing complexion and gender of the workforce in the last several decades, and as the standard of living of working Americans has eroded, loyal opposition from inside the labor movement has been pressuring the leadership to wake up and grapple with this changing landscape. Last October the leadership of the AFL-CIO changed hands: the "old guard," stagnant forces represented by **Lane Kirkland** were dumped in favor of the more activist and politically attuned **John Sweeney**, **Richard Trumpka**, and **Linda Chavez-Thompson**. The welcome result has been a call for more emphasis on organizing, political action and communications among the top ranks of the AFL-CIO. The new leadership seems committed to encouraging greater participation from both the rank and file members and from labor's many supporters. There is renewed energy and resources for organizing unorganized workers.

Although individual unions have made great progress in entering the information age (the **Communication Workers of America** have initiated a web page and bulletin board system to link

their locals and membership) much of labor's communications efforts in the past

have been focused on trying to get a fairer shake from commercial television. But more is happening. The AFL-CIO has a labor on-line bulletin board (**LaborNet**, not to be confused with **LaborNet@igc.**) available to staff and officers, and a web site open to the membership and general public. Training and organizing departments of many unions are using video. The **Labor Institute of Public Affairs (LIPA)** produces and distributes video news packages and

provides invaluable support to beginning access producers who need stock footage and help with graphics and music. Labor radio has taken off in recent years with dozens of local labor radio shows, and several on statewide networks.

This issue is about labor's efforts in community media, so not all examples are strictly public access, but all of it reflects community media at its best. Some of the programs are cablecast on educational channels. Labor access tapes are frequently used in other settings for training and publicity. Some programs lease regular channel time in order to insure a regular time slot. One union has used a local leased access channel to open up the debate in an organizing campaign (see **Trish Westwater's** article on page 12 of this **CMR**).

**Free Speech TV** is regularly bicycling a block of programming that includes labor

programs to dozens of cable systems. *We Do the Work*, which started as a labor access program in California, and *Shop Talk* are two excellent series now appearing in PBS affiliates all over the nation.

The compelling element in all these articles is that labor access *works*. It does what access is supposed to do. It empowers people who have little voice. It unites people in spite of their differences. It gets ideas and information out that are blocked by the commercial media. It increases the level of public discussion around economic and political issues. It keeps the local media on their toes around labor issues to keep from getting scooped by the local access channel. It gets and keeps people involved in their unions. All these successes are documented by the producers who contributed to these pages.

The lively and significant programming going on in local access centers should be expanded and promoted on a national scale. Several articles raise the

Continued on next page...

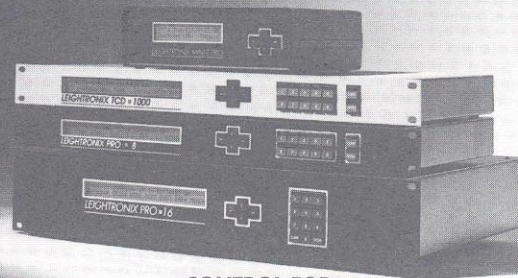
## TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR CHANNELS with Programmable Event Controllers from LEIGHTRONIX!

### LOCAL ORIGATION PROGRAM PLAYBACK

- COMMUNITY ACCESS • EDUCATIONAL ACCESS
- LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACCESS • LEASED ACCESS

### PRIVATE INFORMATION CHANNELS

- COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY INFORMATION & ENTERTAINMENT
- CORPORATE AND INDUSTRIAL COMMUNICATIONS
- MEDICAL COMMUNICATIONS STAFF TRAINING/PATIENT EDUCATION



### CONTROL FOR

UNATTENDED CHANNEL OPERATION • UNATTENDED RECORDING  
TIMED EVENT VIDEO & AUDIO SWITCHING

**LEIGHTRONIX, INC**

2330 Jarco Drive Holt, MI 48842  
(517) 694-8000 • Fax (517) 694-1600



# Do You Have a Labor Program on Your Community Channel?

Continued from previous page question, "Why isn't there a labor cable channel?" A nationally distributed labor channel is entirely feasible as a mix of local and national fare, public affairs and entertainment, commercial and non-commercial programming. Public access is only one way labor can and should respond to the challenges and opportunities of new communications technologies, but the access producers who speak on these pages provide models for the kinds of programming needed in every local community across the nation.

International news, candidate interviews, economic analysis, women's issues, racial justice, sustainable development debates, all appear regularly on shows produced by labor access producers. The sixteen active labor access producers who sent in reports, pictures, graphics, and interviews represent over a dozen different labor unions or labor organizations. Their efforts

represent an incredible array of experiences, results, and programs. But they are only a few of the many producers involved

video training. Send them this issue of **CMR**. Call the AFL-CIO state office in your state and ask them why they don't

have a labor channel on your cable system. Offer to help. Call your PBS station and ask them to show the labor series *We Do the Work*. Don't take no for an answer. Change doesn't happen overnight. Labor needs a voice. Access will be stronger for it. Labor will be stronger. Our communities will be stronger. To paraphrase **Joe Hill**, "Don't agonize, organize!"

*Sally Alvarez is a long-time public access activist. She managed an access studio in Atlanta from 1982-1986. She recently completed her doctorate at Emory University, and now lives in Greensboro, North Carolina, where she teaches mass communications and public relations at Bennett College.*



Photo courtesy Cavanaugh's Corner

**Mike Cavanaugh of Cavanaugh's Corner videotapes a segment in front of UNITE! offices.**  
(See story on page 18 of this **CMR**.)

in this work, and more importantly, they represent only a fraction of what could be generated if the labor movement and the access community could see the importance of expanding this cooperation.

Is your access center taking advantage of this potential source of programming and support? Are your local labor organizations taking advantage of this tremendous opportunity to get their message out? We want the following pages to offer inspiration, advice, and concrete guidance for access and labor folks to work together:

Get in touch with **UPPNET**. Call **LIPA** and find out what's already produced that you can put on your local channel. Sign on to **LABORNET**. Call Free Speech TV and get their programming on your channel. Call your local central labor body and offer them free

Continued from page 15

*Moved*, included a 15-minute dialogue between *From the Democratic Left* host **Bob Fittrakis** and President of Local 1199 **Tom Woodruff**, analyzing the event and current political situation. The hour-long program played on the access channel only four times, but the provocative footage and discussion generated a flurry of calls each time it played from interested viewers. The general reaction was that viewers were both shocked and excited that this had happened in their hometown. One retired autoworker said, "It's about time. It's the best TV I've watched all year. The edited piece was also sent to other access stations in Ohio. Perhaps the best outcome of the event was that it inspired the SEIU to send their own public relations person to ACTV to take classes and start an SEIU Local 1199 program on the public access channel!"

*Suzanne Patzer is a staff member at ACTV, the Columbus, Ohio access center. She has been producing From the Democratic Left since 1990.*

**Sennetech**  
INTERFACE PRODUCTS

## TALLY CONTROL for WJ-MX50

Easy installation.

Connects to RS422 port.



**Model MX50T**  
**\$475**

## TALLY & GPI for VIDEO TOASTER

**Model VTT4**

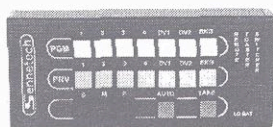
**\$495**



Easy installation, connects to keyboard jack. GPI can select AUTO, TAKE, or TITLER.

## VIDEO TOASTER REMOTE CONTROL

Operate your Video Toaster Switcher from your studio or other location



**Model VTRC**  
**\$395**

**SENNETECH, INC.**

3990 CAPITAL CITY BLVD. LANSING, MI 48906  
Phone (517) 321-1905 Fax (517) 321-8750



# Workers' Voices In The Global Economy

Continued from page 21

States but has affiliates through the **Association For Progressive Communication (APC)** in Russia and England as well as an international network of computer communication centers around the world. On **LaborNet.IGC** there has been an effort to develop a conference on labor video that would list all labor videos around the world.

The LaborNet WWW Home Page at <http://www.igc.apc.org/labornet/> is now the most looked-at labor web page in the world and it

includes links to South African, Korean and many other labor web pages the world over. LaborNet.IGC also wants to develop a labor conference on every country in the world and to establish conferences for every multinational corporation in the world. This could link workers worldwide who work for the same multinational.

This approach of integrating labor video, computers and multimedia is critical in both producing and distributing international labor videos.

As the possibility of sending video footage over the internet is expanded, the possibility of reaching an audience of millions in hours is now closer to reality.

The **Union Producers and Programmers Network (UPPNET)** has been building support for the establishment of a labor cable channel as a tool of reaching the millions of unorganized and organized workers.

The development of an international labor cable channel is also a necessity in the global struggle against the multinationals and their search for the "union-free environment." This becomes even more necessary when we consider the brutal effects of NAFTA, GATT and the WTO. These organizations have one goal and

that is the freedom of global capital to avoid any control by labor or other democratic forces.

The integration of these new communication technologies, the struggle to defend them against censorship and privatization, the effort to expand the usage of these technologies in poorer countries is a task for all of labor world wide. We must begin to frame the issues facing labor on a global scale and we can do this not only by mobilization of the labor movement but by establishing the means to get our message and issues out to the majority of the working people of the world. These initiatives among international labor activists show that the end of national unionism is not only on the agenda but is critical if world labor is to begin the reorganization that is necessary to deal with the robber barons who are running the world economy.

*Steve Zeltzer produces Labor On the Job (San Francisco), and participates in the Labor Video Project Steering Committee of LaborNet.*

**The development of an international labor cable channel is also a necessity in the global struggle against the multinationals and their search for the 'union-free environment.'**

## An Invitation to Join the

# Alliance for Communications Democracy

6...increasing awareness of Community Television through educational programs and participation in court cases involving franchise enforcement and constitutional questions about access television.

**Become an Alliance Subscriber for \$350/year** and receive detailed reports on current court cases threatening access, pertinent historical case citations, and other Alliance activities.

- Voting membership open to non-profit access operations for an annual contribution of \$3,000.
- Non-voting memberships available to organizations and individuals at the following levels:
  - Alliance Associate, \$2500 - copies of all briefs and reports.
  - Alliance Supporter, \$500 - copies of all reports and enclosures.
  - Alliance Subscriber, \$350 - copies of all reports.

Direct membership inquiries to Rob Brading, Multnomah Community Television, 26000 SE Stark St., Gresham, OR 97038, or phone 503/667-7636.

**Voting Members:** Chicago Access Corporation, Illinois • Montgomery Community Television, Inc., Maryland • Staten Island Television, New York • Boston Community Access & Programming Foundation, Inc., Massachusetts • GRTV, Grand Rapids, Michigan • Tucson Community Cable Corporation, Arizona • Ōlelo: The Corporation for Community TV, Hawaii • Multnomah Community TV, Oregon • Manhattan Neighborhood Network, New York • Cable Access St. Paul, Minnesota.

**Non-voting Members:** City of Iowa City, Iowa • North Suburban Access Corp., Minnesota • Oakland County Cable Corporation, Michigan • Ann Arbor Community Access Television, Michigan • Columbus Community Cable Access, Inc., Ohio • Capital Community TV, Oregon • Cincinnati Community Video, Ohio • Alliance for Community Media, Central States Region • Alliance for Community Media, Far West Region • George Stoney, New York University, NY • Bronx Community Cable Programming, Inc., NY.



## UAW's Cable Show in L.A.

Continued from page 14

labor movement as a whole," says Director Wells. "Labor access TV can play a major role in communicating labor's message to our members as well as the entire community."

The UAW show also recently caught the eye of **Jim Wood**, the financial secretary-treasurer of the **Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO**, one of the largest central labor bodies in the country. Subsequent talks yielded a unanimously approved Federation resolution to work together with the UAW to expand the labor access programming. A joint plan is being put together now for the 1996 season which will include a major effort in recruiting and training a large core of volunteers.

This emphasis on expanded recruitment for the upcoming year points to an important benefit of a labor access project. Clearly, one of the biggest challenges facing the union movement today is

reinvigorating the membership. Offering rank and file union members the opportunity to be part of a television crew is certainly an exciting way to involve them in their union.

The outlook for the future of labor access programming in Los Angeles is very exciting. For the labor movement, this project offers the opportunity to inexpensively communicate to large numbers of working people on television, the most critical medium of our time. Thus far, the effect of the UAW programming on the community has remained largely unmeasured. However, as a more strategic approach to programming is devised for 1996, the impact should be both apparent and considerable.

*Keith Skotnes is an international representative for the United Auto Workers (UAW) in Artesia, California (Region 6).*

## Independent

Continued from page 20

believe that their mission is accomplished by providing access, in the name of diversity, to anyone who learns to use their services. They believe that actively reaching out to the general public and building a broad viewership goes beyond their description. Access TV cannot be so pure. It is the only existing widespread medium with the potential for alerting the public to what the corporate-subsidized Gingrich Congress is planning to do to that same public. Access TV has to take a giant step forward beyond the essential role of providing a means of expression to valid but often particular interests. It must reach out and actively, seductively, persuasively speak to the broad, inclusive rank and file of the unincorporated public. It must give breath to their potential solidarity.

*Tony Chapin is an independent producer living in Cambridge, Massachusetts.*

## CONNECTIONS

Continued from page 5

producers and broadcast organizations.

The web page URL is <http://www.euro.net/sala/media>. Telephone 31-20-6202970 or fax 31-20-6253280. ISDN 31-20-6387093.

This program is one of the activities of **Myster**, the **Amsterdam Cybercenter**, that you can find via WWW at the URLs <http://net.info.nl/myster> or <http://www.euro.net/sala/myster>.

**1996 VideOlympiade and Vidéazimut International Conference**

**from Press Release**

The International Coordinating Committee for the **VideOlympiades**, **Vidéazimut** and the **Associacao Brasileira de Video Popular** have extended an invitation to the third screening of curated tapes and an international conference on community television and video.

Videotapes will be curated by an international panel and presented at the Vidéazimut Conference. Each country should select and submit no more than a total of 8 tapes spread among the following five categories: 1) People in the Street; 2) People in Computer Land; 3) People in

the Village; 4) People's Television; and 5) Lovely People. Entries are encouraged to be 10 minutes duration or less. A selection of the best tapes will be distributed internationally with all profit used to pay VideOlympiade expenses. English or Spanish subtitles are encouraged if possible.

Each country should submit no more than one entry in each category no later than April 1, 1996. For more information, please contact the USA Secretariat, **Dirk Koning**, at Community Media Center, 50 Library Plaza NE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503. Phone and fax: (616) 459-4788; e-mail [dirk@grcmc.org](mailto:dirk@grcmc.org)

**Chicago Access Wins Human Relations Award**

**from Press Release**

On January 24, **Chicago Access Corporation (CAC)**, the nonprofit group that administers the city's public access cable channels, was awarded the first **Bernadine C. Washington Media Award** from the **City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations**. The awards are presented annually to individuals and organizations that make outstanding contributions to the

improvement of human relations in the City of Chicago. **Bernadine C. Washington** was a broadcast pioneer as the vice president and the nation's first general manager of a major radio station, **Chicago's WVON**.

The five local noncommercial cable channels that make up **Chicago Access Network Television (CAN TV)** broadcast programs that address housing, employment, domestic violence, education and a wide range of other community concerns. Chicago nonprofit groups use the channels to offer information, assistance and referrals for critically needed services.

"This is the one media in Chicago that gives equitable access to people," stated CAC Executive Director **Barbara Popovic**. "CAN TV programming crosses economic, racial and political barriers, reaching into homes throughout the city to bring people together on a wide range of issues."

**Add CMR to your press release list**  
Send your press releases to **CMR** Coordinating Editor **Jim Peters** by e-mail or fax. The e-mail address is [jpeters@erols.com](mailto:jpeters@erols.com); fax number is (703) 391-2049.



# AUDIENCE

ACCESS TO VIDEO DISTRIBUTION

Formerly Leased Access Report

## Get Your Program on the Air Start Making Money!

New federal leased access laws require cable operators to lease affordable air time to independent video producers. This offers video producers the opportunity to generate revenue by: 1) selling advertising; 2) selling products directly to viewers, as in home shopping; or 3) selling the video program itself through pay-per-view.

Designed to foster more competition within the telecommunications industry and attract entrepreneurs, the laws specify that any cable system with at least 36 channels and 30,000 subscribers must set aside 10 percent of its channels for leased access. The proscribed fee for half an hour of air time: forty cents—that's 40¢ for each thousand people on the cable system. Thus, a cable system with 30,000 subscribers must lease a half hour for only \$12.00.

### 3 WAYS TO START NOW:

#### 1. AUDIENCE Newsletter

In every monthly newsletter you'll receive the latest information on:

- News
- The Law
- Your Rights
- Program Ideas
- New 500-Channel Networks
- Other Low-Cost Media

#### 2. Leased Access HANDBOOK

—Get important information on the basics, Leased Access laws and regulations, designing your show, making profit with advertising and much more.

#### 3. Leased Access CASE STUDY

—Learn from the experiences of successful producer, Mike Conway. Learn how his *Wilderness Productions* gained access and made profit by taking advantage of Leased Access distribution.

### How to Order:

- ☐ Enter my subscription to **AUDIENCE**, 12 monthly issues for **\$79**.
- ☐ Send me the **Leased Access Handbook** for **\$79.95**
- ☐ Send me the **Leased Access Case Study** for **\$9.95**
- ☐ **Back Issues** available at **\$8.00** per issue

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Charge my    ☐ Payment enclosed

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

State Sales Tax: CA residents add 7.25%. Shipping/Handling: Canadian add \$5.00/Foreign add \$10.00.

Allow 4 weeks for delivery. Priority Shipping: add \$5.00 for 2-4 day delivery.



Mail to:

Leased Access Report  
PO Box 4591  
Chico, CA 95927

Fax (916) 891-8443

CMR96





**ALLIANCE  
FOR  
COMMUNITY  
MEDIA**

## **Join Your Community Media Colleagues! Support the Alliance's Public Policy Fund**

Thanks to the generosity of many of your colleagues, the Alliance for Community Media has been successful in pushing our legislative agenda with Congress and in informing you of the results. But our work cannot stop here! The Alliance must now work with the FCC, monitor state legislation, and prepare for our First Amendment case before the Supreme Court! As you know, our current dues structure cannot support an ongoing public policy program. Please join the Public Policy Council by contributing \$2,500 or more, or join the Public Policy Network for \$500. In the meantime, please thank your colleagues who have made our public policy efforts possible:

### **Public Policy Council Members (\$2,500 or more)**

ACCESS TUCSON, Tucson AZ; BOSTON NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK, Boston MA; CHICAGO ACCESS CORPORATION, Chicago IL; CENTRAL STATES REGION, Alliance for Community Media; MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK, New York NY; MULTNOMAH COMMUNITY TV, Gresham, OR; NORTH SUBURBAN ACCESS CORP., Roseville MN; NORTHWEST COMMUNITY TV/WCAC, Brooklyn Park MN; 'OLELO: THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC ACCESS, Honolulu HI

### **Public Policy Network Members (\$500 and \$1,000)**

ACCESS SACRAMENTO, Sacramento CA; ACTV21/COLUMBUS COMMUNITY CABLE, Columbus OH; AMHERST COMMUNITY TELEVISION, Amherst MA; ANN ARBOR COMMUNITY ACCESS TV, Ann Arbor, MI; ARLINGTON COMMUNITY TV, Arlington, VA; BRONX COMMUNITY CABLE PROGRAMMING, Bronx NY; BURNSVILLE/EAGAN CABLE COMMISSION, Eagan, MN; THE BUSKE GROUP, Sacramento CA; CABLE ACCESS DALLAS, Dallas, TX; CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY TELEVISION, Cambridge MA; CAPE COD COMMUNITY TELEVISION, South Yarmouth MA; CAPITAL COMMUNITY TELEVISION, Salem OR; CINCINNATI COMMUNITY VIDEO, Cincinnati OH; CITIZEN TELEVISION, New Haven CT; CITY OF ST. PAUL, St. Paul MN; COMMUNITY ACCESS CENTER, Kalamazoo MI; COPEN & LIND, Amherst, MA; DCTV, Washington DC; EVANSTON COMMUNITY TELEVISION, Evanston IL; FAIRFAX CABLE ACCESS CORPORATION, Fairfax VA; INTER-COMM OF SOUTHERN WISCONSIN CHAPTER, Alliance for Community Media; JONES INTERCABLE/TAMPA, Tampa FL; CARL KUCHARSKI, Somerville MA; LOWELL TELECOMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION, Lowell MA; MALDEN ACCESS TELEVISION, Malden MA; MANCHESTER COMMUNITY TELEVISION, Manchester NH; MILWAUKEE ACCESS TELECOM. AUTHORITY, Milwaukee WI; MULTNOMAH COMMUNITY TV, Gresham, OR; NEWTON CABLE ACCESS CORP., Newton Highlands MA; NORTHEAST REGION, Alliance for Community Media; NORTHWEST REGION, Alliance for Community Media; OAKLAND COUNTY CABLE COMMUNITY CORPORATION, Troy, MI; PEGASYS, INC., Enid OK; SALEM ACCESS TELEVISION CORP., Salem MA; SARATOGA COMMUNITY ACCESS, Saratoga CA; SOLON CITY SCHOOLS, Solon, OH; SOLON COMMUNITY TELEVISION, Solon OH; SOMERVILLE COMMUNITY ACCESS TV, Somerville MA; SOUTHEAST REGION, Alliance for Community Media; STATEN ISLAND COMMUNITY TV, Staten Island, NY; SW OAKLAND CABLE COMMISSION, Farmington Hills MI; TAMPA EDUCATIONAL CABLE CONSORTIUM, Tampa, FL; TUALATIN VALLEY COMMUNITY ACCESS, Beaverton, OR; THURSTON COMMUNITY TELEVISION, Olympia WA; WAYCROSS COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING BOARD, Forest Park OH

**Please send your check to the Alliance for Community Media  
666 11th Street, NW, Suite 806, Washington DC 20001-4542  
For more information, call (202) 393-2650.**



**ALLIANCE  
FOR  
COMMUNITY  
MEDIA**

**666 11th St. NW, Suite 806  
Washington, DC 20001-4542**

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Merrifield, VA  
Permit #1388